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30, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.
1861.

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THE

FRIGATE AND THE LUGGER.

CHAPTER I.

Sir Sidney Smith having pulled back to the "Vengeance," found our hero busily engaged routing out all the shot that could be found; but to their exceeding surprise and vexation not more than three or four pounds could be discovered.

"This is very unfortunate, Thornton," said Sir Sidney. "However, get under weigh, for, by Jove, I perceive a large lugger coming out, no doubt to attack us."

Our hero accordingly got the lugger under sail, though, as the wind blew, and with the strong flood tide making, there was very little prospect of reaching the "Diamond," though they did not perceive it at the time, so very much engaged were they. Captain Baptiste Gaudet, the late skipper of the "Vengeance," who was put ashore with his crew, seeing the way the wind and tide set, manned two large boats, with their crews well armed, and pulled out for the lugger, to recapture her. In the meantime, several shots from the shore reached the vessel. All, on board, however, were prepared for a desperate resistance. As the enemy came up, a continued discharge of musketry took place from both vessels, but the lugger discharged her four-pounders rammed full of grape into the "Vengeance," wounding several of the men, and a young midshipman named Beecroft. This gallant young lad refused to leave the deck, merely tying a handkerchief over the wound.

"I fear, Thornton," said Sir Sidney, stooping to pick up his hat, which a musket ball had

knocked off, "I fear we shall have to give in, or needlessly sacrifice our brave fellows; there are four dead already, and I see those boats coming up are full of men."

"I wish most devoutly, Sir Sidney," said William Thornton, anxiously gazing seaward, "that you had not turned back, the consequence would then have been as nothing. Your capture would be a terrible blow to the service."

There was no time for words, for a furious fire commenced with musketry from the boats from the crew of the "Vengeance," who came alongside, scrambled up over the quarters with loud cries and shouts.

"There," exclaimed Baptiste Gaudet, the skipper, pointing to William Thornton, who with Saunders alone was making a desperate attempt to drive back a boat's crew boarding over the starboard quarter, whilst Sir Sidney was repelling the troops in the boats, "Sacre tonnere! that's the man who shot my brother-in-law. Don't kill him; drag him down, and that fellow with him."

But our hero and Saunders were not so easily dragged down; a furious fight ensued, and several of the crew of the "Vengeance" were struck to the deck. Just as Sir Sidney surrendered, they were overpowered and at last disarmed, dragged down the companion stairs by the legs, and kicked brutally; they were then strongly bound hand and foot to ring bolts on the cabin-floor, and then Captain Gaudet left them, swearing savagely he would make them remember him before he had done with them.

Whilst this was occurring, Sir Sidney Smith and the midshipman, Westly Wright, were forcibly thrust into the boats along-side with the rest of the men. The former repeatedly asked after William Thornton, but the men only insulted him; they were at once carried ashore and landed at Havre. Sir Sidney and Wright were marched to Rouen, and thence to Paris. This occurrence, however, is history, and has nothing to do with our future narrative; we return to our hero and his faithful follower, Bill Saunders.

Though severely bruised, and with one or two

sharp cutlass wounds, William Thornton and Bill Saunders felt little the worse, experiencing more indignation at the treatment they had received than pain from their injuries.

The cabin, on the floor of which our hero and his fellow captive were stretched, was large and commodious, but perfectly dark, with the exception of a faint light through some bulls' eyes, a tarpaulin having been thrown over the skylight.

"Do these villains mean to murder us, sir?" asked Bill Saunders, after a fierce and vain effort to free himself. "I cannot understand why they should treat your honour in this way."

"I cannot exactly understand it myself, Bill," replied William Thornton. "I soon recognised the skipper of this infernal lugger, that has brought such misfortune upon us, and our Commander, as the instigator of this attack upon us, for I heard him say, 'Pull them down, don't kill them,' so to cut our throats is not their intention, or they would have done so at once."

"I'm blessed, your honour, if I did not also

see the same black-looking rascal I stuck my pike into once before; I thought I had settled his hash then, and I'm blowed if he ain't turned up again. I expect if we don't get the use of our fins they will cut our windpipes, after they gives us a dose of torture, not that what we are enjoying now is pleasant by any means."

"No," returned our hero, "it's not pleasant to be trussed up like barn door fowls. I wonder what they have done with our Commander and the rest of our comrades."

"Look, your honour, I'm blowed now my eyes are getting accustomed to this here light, if I don't see a big clasp knife hanging by a cord to a key in the locker, behind your honour, close to your feet; only try, sir, if you could kick it out."

Lieutenant Thornton worked hi nself round, and by a powerful effort got on his knees, and seeing the knife, after repeated and tiresome efforts, he jerked it out of the lock, and then lying down contrived to get hold of it. As he did so they heard the companion pushed back,

and some persons descended the stairs. Our hero had only time to say:

"Lie still, and be quiet, whatever they say or do."

"Blow me," muttered Bill to himself, "it's easy to do that, seeing I don't understand a word of their cursed lingo, and havn't the power even to rub my own nose; curse them!"

The cabin door was opened, and two men entered, one holding a lantern. Lieutenant Thornton at once recognised the skipper of the "Vengeance," and the mate of the "Bonne-Citoyenne," whom our hero recollected having put on board the "Babet," who was afterwards put ashore at Belleisle by Lieutenant O'Loughlin, and finally, after the departure of the corvette, got on board the "Vengeance," with several more of the schooner's men.

"So," exclaimed Baptiste Gaudet, with a savage oath, throwing the faint light of the lantern on the young Lieutenant's features.

"So there you are—curse you! it was you that shot my brother-in-law, and took his

schooner. Sacre diable! I have a mind now to slice your throat, only I'll work with a bitter revenge out of you."

"You are a cowardly, ungrateful ruffian," said Lieutenant Thornton, calmly; "I gave you the quarter you vowed to refuse us, and besides treated you well, and even restored you to liberty, and this is the return you make."

"It's a cursed deal too good for you; and this beast too," added the mate of the 'Citizen, giving Bill Saunders a savage kick; "run his pike into me," and again he brutally kicked Saunders, whose blood was fever heat with rage.

"Ah! let them bide," said Gaudet, "till we come back, and that cursed frigate has put to sea. Mind if I don't cut your hides into strips, I swore to do so, if we had the luck to catch you, I'll do it, and pitch your carcasses into the sea;" and with fearful oaths, each administering a kick to their helpless captives, they left the cabin, closing the companion.

Bill Saunders foamed at the mouth, till he was in danger of suffocation. He bore the kicks

administered to himself, tolerably, but when he saw the skipper do the same to his Lieutenant, the honest fellow thought his heart would burst.

"Your honour," said Bill, half choking, "I should like to have died, if it would have saved you. The villain! I only wish to live to have my hands round that ruffian's throat."

"Well, Bill, our turn may come yet—I have the knife, and presently we will see what we can do with it—the difficulty is, our hands being bound behind us, to open it."

"Try, sir!" exclaimed Bill, "for the love of heaven do hold it to my mouth: I'll open it with my teeth!"

"I am so fast to this ringbolt that I cannot turn."

After many efforts, however, Bill succeeded in opening the clasp knife.

"Ah! blow me, if we ain't a match for them now," exultingly, exclaimed Bill, who, clasping the knife between his bound hands, he contrived to saw his cords through, with only one or two

slight cuts. In five minutes more, by great exertion, they were both totally freed from their bonds, Bill declaring he could then face a dozen Frenchmen, whilst his master breathed a prayer of thanksgiving. They did not fear death, but to be probably stripped, and cruelly flogged by a set of piratical ruffians, was infinitely worse than death.

"Now, keep quiet a few minutes," said our hero, as Bill stretched his huge frame, to recover his powers, as he declared, that he might annihilate every soul remaining on board the lugger. They listened for several moments, but did not hear a single foot pacing the deck above.

"Most of them have gone ashore," whispered the Lieutenant.

"Let us look in the lockers, your honour, we may find cutlasses, or pistols."

Opening the lockers with the key they picked up from the floor—to their intense joy, they found the large locker full of cutlasses. Bill almost shrieked for joy as he grasped a brace of them.

"Now, your honour, let us burst up the companion, and slice their gizzards."

Cautiously ascending it, as they reached the top, they heard a step pacing the deck, and then our hero heard a voice saying:

"Do you see the boats, François?"

"No," returned a voice in the fore-part of the vessel. "Sacre diable! how long they are, and here's a fine breeze and a strong down tide."

"Now, Bill, put your shoulder to the companion, and up with it, there are only a few on board, the rest I suppose are ashore with the boats."

"More's the pity," growled Bill, as putting his strength to the slide, he sent it into shivers with a loud crash. A volley of oaths from four, or more men, located in various parts of the lugger, saluted the liberated captives as they sprang upon the deck.

"Fire the bow-gun, Pierre, fire the gun," shouted the man near the companion, drawing his cutlass, and joined by four others with boarding pikes, made a desperate rush at our hero

and Bill. But the Frenchmen had to do with two remarkably powerful, active men, both very expert in the use of the cutlass; the man ran, however, with a lighted match, and fired the bow-gun; its loud report echoing from the shore. Our hero's superior skill soon told upon his adversaries, two of whom fell dead upon the deck; Bill, dashing at three others, they fled, one in his terror threw himself overboard, whilst the remaining two, leaping down the fore-hatch into the fore-cabin, left the victors in complete possession of the "Vengeance."

"Cut the cable, Bill, cut the cable," shouted our hero, running to the tiller; "hack it with your cutlass."

Bill stumbled upon an axe, and with a single blow severed the cable, when instantaneously, the lugger, in the strong tide and wind, swung round. By great, good fortune, and the carelessness of those on shore, drinking and carousing, the only craft that could have pursued them with a chance of success had just taken the ground, and was hard and fast, when the men alarmed by the

sound of the bow-gun, rushed down to their boats. It was a dark night, with a strong land wind, and a fast ebb tide. Lieutenant Thornton could hear the splash of oars in boats passing; so lashing the heavy tiller amidship, he hastened forward to see if he and Bill could run up the immense fore-lug. There was a Spanish windlass attached to the mast; so taking a turn of the haulyards, they put their whole strength to it, and ran it up, perspiring with the effort. Making fast the sheet-blocks, our hero ran aft, just as the foremost boat, finding they began to lose ground, the moment the lug filled, fired their muskets into the lugger, but with no further result than knocking a few splinters out of the bulwarks.

"I wish I could give you a dose of grape, you beggars," exclaimed Bill, shaking his clenched hand at the boats, now dropping astern fast.

The reports of the guns evidently aroused the attention of the forts on the north shore, for our successful adventurers beheld lights moving along the front of the battery; but as it was impossible for those on the battery to know what was the

cause of the firing, and the darkness of the night rendering the lugger almost imperceptible, she ran past unsuspected. Bill Saunders, with our hero's help, set the mizen, and under these two sails the "Vengeance" ran out rapidly into the outer road. They did not expect to see the "Diamond" at anchor after the events of the day, but fully expected as they ran off the land and daylight came, to see her either lying to or standing off and on.

"What shall I do with the two vagabonds forward?" questioned Bill, coming aft to take the tiller, "one is dead, and the other has an ugly clip over the left eye. Your Honor hits hard, I seed him catch it as he drove his boarding pike at your breast. There are two others below; I can work these lubbers on deck and make them lend a hand."

"Let us run three or four miles out, Bill; we can then lie to for daylight. You can, however, put the dead man overboard, and we will see what we can do for the one that is wounded. Just go and see if you can find a lantern. I

should be glad if you could also lay your hand upon something stronger than water, I have lost some blood and feel a little fagged; nothing to signify though."

"We want to splice the main brace, your Honor, after our skrimmage, and mayhap I may find a keg of brandy," and Bill dived down below, and after a good search found plenty of wine and some brandy in the steward's lockers, besides three or four days' provisions.

A little brandy and biscuit refreshed both our hero and his follower. The night continued dark and the breeze very fresh, shifting as they cleared the outward harbour, blowing partly along the coast. The "Vengeance" was one of the fastest and handsomest privateer luggers out of a French port. She was above one hundred and sixty tons, and remarkably well provided with every requisite.

Bill taking the tiller, our hero proceeded with a lighted lantern to explore the cabin. He discovered the late skipper's stock of garments, and a locker full of pistols, but no store any-

where in the cabin of powder and ball. Returning upon deck, he found Bill consoling himself with a large lump of salt beef and a bottle of wine.

"She's a very fine craft, sir," said Saunders, "and slips through the water under her fore lug, though only half hoisted, like a witch. It was nearly up with us, sir, only for the knife."

"In truth it was, Bill! Such events should teach us never to despair, and that there is a Providence always watching over us. Now if we cannot make out the 'Diamond' we must make a run across the Channel. Rouse up those two fellows in the fore cuddy to help us to make sail, hunger will freshen them up if they should turn sulky."

"What's that smoke?" continued our hero, rather startled at seeing a wreath of smoke issuing from the fore cuddy; "run forward, Bill, and see what those fellows are about, they cannot have been so mad as to fire the craft!"

Saunders rushed forward, and as he did so the two Frenchmen staggered up upon deck, and

seeing Bill alone threw their arms round his neck strove to drag him down, and to stick him with their open knives; smoke and flame at the same time bursting up through the hatch.

Bill shook off his two opponents as a mastiff would a lap dog, and with a terrible blow with his clenched fist, sent one sprawling against the windlass. Lieutenant Thornton had rushed to his assistance, but Bill wanted no help, for his other assailant fled to the bows with savage oaths, exulting that they had fired the vessel.

"Did you think," he fiercely exclaimed, as our hero came up, "that you were going to have the 'Vengeance' for a prize; we are all sworn to sink or fire her."

"Then blow me," said Bill Saunders, when the Lieutenant told him what the man had said, "if you shall either sink or be burned in her," and seizing the Frenchman in his terrible grasp before our hero could prevent him, he hurled him over the bows.

Despite their imminent danger, the Lieutenant

ran aft and threw the drowning wretch a rope; he made an effort to grasp it, failed, and sank with a despairing cry. Thus the wretch who did not fear to meet death by fire, shrieked in despair in meeting his doom by water.

"Haul aft the sheet, Bill," shouted our hero, "it's quite in vain to think of extinguishing this fire, we must run her ashore round yonder headland. Providentially the wind permits us to make the land without a tack.

As the deck caught, the flames threw a vivid glare over the waters, as the lugger dashed on for the land, as if urged by her prospect of certain destruction. It was an awful moment! The flames spread to the rigging of the lugger, and then the sail, and the sheets being consumed, the fiery mass dashed wildly about, as the flames roared, the strong breeze increasing their force.

"Come down below, Bill, she will strike in a few moments, and let us put on the Frenchmen's garments; who knows but we may do something for freedom yet."

"Curse the villains!" cried Bill, "they have

burned the craft, and now I am to be turned into a frog eating, soup swilling Frenchman."

In a few minutes they were completely rigged in two French seamen's garments, and the furious flames hurried them on deck just as the lugger struck upon a reef, gave two or three heavy lurches, heeled over, and sunk in deep water under a lofty cliff, extinguishing the flames of the hull, and leaving the remnants of the burning sail fluttering in the wind. That part of the deck unconsumed was level with the water, but the swell over the bank washed over it. Lieutenant Thornton and Saunders, half blinded by the smoke and flying sparks from the burning sail, threw themselves over the side, a few strokes brought them ashore under the cliff. Landing upon some sharp and slippery rocks, and shaking themselves as they landed, and clambered over the rocks, our hero said to his companion:

"We must get as far from this spot as we can, and dry ourselves in the morning sun, before we reconnoitre inland."

"Ah! your Honor, it was a bad job. I ought to have pitched those two lubbers overboard at first," and growling and lamenting, Bill followed his officer along the base of the cliff; where we must leave them and retrace our narrative many years in our next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW pages respecting the family of the De Bracys will here be necessary for the clear understanding of our story.

Early in life Sir Oscar De Bracy and is sister, Anne, were left orphans. On attaining his twenty-first year Sir Oscar, then a lieutenant in the navy, came into possession of the family property. His sister had gone abroad with her aunt, a Mrs. Webb, the widow of a Colonel Webb, who, dying, had left his wife a very handsome fortune. Being in delicate health, Mrs. Webb was advised to try a warm

climate; so, taking her niece, at that time only seventeen, they proceeded to the Continent, and settled for some time in Naples.

The Court of Naples, at this period, was accounted one of the most corrupt in Europe; but Mrs. Webb, being of a retiring disposition, lived in comparative seclusion, in a villa, situated on the River Chiaga, then the favourite drive of the pleasure-seeking Neapolitans.

Anne De Bracy was charmed with the lovely scenery and the delicious climate. At night she would sit for hours at her window, enjoying the air so refreshing after the heat of the day; as the moon stood high in the heavens, silvering with its soft light the columns of smoke from Vesuvius, as they rose upwards in curling wreaths towards heaven. Then the countless fishing skiffs, with their lights flashing in the waters from their sterns, to attract the lobsters and large fish, which rise at once to the light, and are caught. To Anne De Bracy, the tall, dark figures on which the bright flames glanced, amid the calm stillness of the moonlit scene, ap-

peared almost demon-like. Almost close beside the handsome villas and mansions along the river, are to be seen the strange dwellings of the poor fishermen, which are scooped out like caves from the hard rock. Many of them without any kind of window, receiving the light and air needed, from the open door.

Anne De Bracy, with her aunt, who rarely stirred abroad till evening, used often to walk along the front of these primitive dwellings, lighted within by the oil lamp, revealing to view the careless, and life-loving family within; the girls gaily singing and chatting at times, the men mending nets, and making bark-woven baskets.

One evening, a rather sultry one, Mrs. Webb and her niece were walking along the beach, when the former complained of a sudden faintness, and before they could even reach one of the cottages, or rather, caves, she fainted in the frightened girl's arms. Miss De Bracy uttered a cry of alarm; and as she did so, a young man, in a fisherman's costume, rushed from behind a

jutting rock, and ran forward in time to catch Mrs. Webb in his arms.

"She has only fainted, lady," said the stranger, as he bore the insensible Mrs. Webb towards the rock, from which ran a rill of pure water, with which he gently bathed her face. "Do not be frightened, she will soon revive."

Now that she was no longer alone, Miss De Bracy was less alarmed; but the tones of the fisherman's voice, his manner and appearance, surprised her, as by the strong light of a full moon she gazed at him.

He was a tall, handsome man, much fairer than the generality of the Neapolitans; his attire the same picturesque costume as that of the fishermen, but better, and of finer materials; whilst he spoke pure Italian, but not the Neapolitan dialect.

"This is no fisherman," thought the young girl, as she thanked the stranger, who was holding the pungent essence contained in a bottle to her aunt's nostrils; who in a very short time was able to continue the walk.

Looking up at the motionless figure of the fisherman, Mrs. Webb politely thanked him, and taking a few silver coins from her purse, she begged him to accept them. Her niece's eyes were fixed upon the stranger; and she saw his dark cheek flush, and his still darker eyes sparkle with a strange expression; but he at once said, gently putting back Mrs. Webb's hand:—

"No, lady; not for a service of this kind; your thanks are ample reward."

And with a look of unmistakable admiration at Anne De Bracy, which called the hot blood to her cheek, he made a graceful salute, and retired amongst the rocks.

"How very odd, Anne," said Mrs. Webb; "what an uncommonly handsome, graceful kind of person for a fisherman. I fear I frightened you, dear."

"I was not so much frightened, aunt," answered the niece, thoughtfully; "but as we were some little distance from help, I did not exactly know what to do, till this stranger ran up and carried you here, and sprinkled your face with water."

"He is certainly a very handsome fisherman," observed Mrs. Webb; "we have seen, I think, all our neighbours here, and I certainly never remarked him."

"I do not think he is a fisherman," replied Miss De Bracy, with a smile, as they slowly proceeded home.

"Then what can he be, Anne?" questioned the aunt; "this is no masquerading time."

That question Anne De Bracy cared not to answer; she could conjecture, but that was all.

Our space will not permit us to dwell upon all the events of Anne De Bracy's life; we must only touch on its important parts briefly, till we bring her again before our readers, as the unfortunate Duchess de Coulancourt.

The handsome fisherman was Mr. Granby Arden, the elder brother of Sir Godfrey Etherton. Of a strange and eccentric character, but possessed of a highly cultivated mind, he, by his peculiar mode of thinking and reading, imbibed a decided aversion to all monarchical govern-

ments. His great-great-grandfather had been a staunch supporter of Oliver Cromwell, and had lost his life in opposing the return of Charles II. His estates were mostly all forfeited to the Crown, so that the two brothers inherited but moderate fortunes. Mr. Granby Arden, however, succeeded to his mother's property, an income of some twelve or fourteen hundred a year, whilst Godfrey Arden entered the navy.

Granby Arden, when two-and-twenty, passed over into France; where his prejudice against kings and rulers, even at that period, had abundant supporters. With a perfect knowledge of the French, Italian, and German languages, his handsome person, and persuasive eloquence, aided by a voice remarkable for its rich and powerful tones, soon caused him to be remarked in the political circles of the capital of France. Louis XVI. had just commenced his career of troubles—the monarchy of France was, at this time a pure despotism—but the resources of the realm, and the energies of the people, were wasted and paralyzed.

Granby Arden became the associate of Diderot, and D'Alembert; he read with avidity the pungent writings of Voltaire, upsetting all preconceived notions by satire and sarcasm; and Rousseau, who, by his appeals to the passions, worked to frenzy by his high-wrought pictures, those minds stirred by doubt.

Though a hater of royalty and despotism, in every shape and form, Granby Arden was of a kind and generous nature; he, however, so involved himself in political intrigues, that, in the end, he was forced to fly from Paris—for the time was not yet come for the overthrow of all the ancient usages of the kingdom.

Granby Arden went to Italy. The corrupt court of Naples, and the licentiousness of the Queen and her supposed lover and minister, Acton, induced him, whilst there, to join in a secret intrigue to upset the government. To carry out his own, and the projects of others, he disguised himself as a fisherman, and dwelt with one of their body for a time, in their caves on the Riviere di Chiaga, and there love, for the time, overturned all his projects.

He saw, and became desperately enamoured of, Miss Anne de Bracy.

Granby Arden's name in England was notorious for his political opinions; and he well knew, when he made himself known to Miss de Bracy, and gained her love, that her brother, Sir Oscar de Bracy, a distinguished officer in the navy, would never give his consent to their marriage.

We need not detail with minuteness on a very common occurrence; his eloquence overpowered all the fair girl's arguments; she was beloved and loved, and, as women will do, confided in him, she loved, and they fled from Naples together, without leaving a trace behind them, nor could Mrs. Webb give any explanation of her niece's mysterious disappearance. At Sienna, Anne de Bracy became Mrs. Arden, and, near Leghorn, they took a very pretty cottage, and for a time love banished politics from Mr. Arden's mind.

Whilst residing in that vicinity, Mr. Arden became acquainted with Lord Hood, then only a post-captain, whose ship was off Leghorn;

and, who one night, would have fallen a victim to assassination, being taken for another officer, had not Mr. Arden, who chanced to be returning home, come to his assistance, and struck down one of the assassins—the other fled. An intimacy ensued, and before Captain Hood sailed, Mr. Arden stated to him that he was a married man, and introduced him to his beautiful wife, but did not mention her maiden name. Shortly after Captain Hood's departure, a son was born to Mr. Arden, and called Julian; and, in due course, a daughter, who was named Mabel; after which, they travelled into Switzerland, but always under a feigned name; and, finally, when Julian Arden had reached his sixth year, and little Mabel her third, letters were received from Paris, which induced Mr. Arden to return to that city, notwithstanding his wife's tears and entreaties, leaving his wife and children in a cottage he rented near Lyons, and, before three months had expired, fell in a duel with an officer of the guards.

We need scarcely say the grief and agony of

the bereaved wife was terrible; but, before she could rouse herself from her distraction, and fly into other lands with her children, the revolution which had broken out presented a barrier to flight. The cottage Mrs. Arden inhabited was upon the estate of the Duke de Coulancourt, a nobleman of considerable wealth, high birth, and a confirmed friend of the unfortunate king; he was at this time in his forty-eighth year, and unmarried. The persecution of Collet D'Herbois, who headed a violent party in Lyons, drove Mrs. Arden to seek the protection of her landlord, the Duke. The aristocracy were not yet overthrown, though they still possessed only a shadow of power. The Duke imprisoned d'Herbois, and, struck by the beauty and grace of the fair widow, for the first time felt the influence of female beauty, and after a lapse of eighteen months, Mrs. Arden became Duchess de Coulancourt. Three years after her first husband's death she accompanied the Duke to an estate in Normandy, from whence his title was derived.

The unfortunate king was then in the last stage of his miserable greatness. The Duke de Coulancourt, who adored his wife, and who was the kindest of fathers to her children, executed a deed constituting her his sole heir. He then, as affairs were getting in a terrible state in the capital, implored her to take refuge in his chateau near Lyons, where the royalists existed in force, promising he would follow after one more effort to serve his royal master; and should he fail, they would fly to Italy or to England. Alas! like many another noble and devoted heart, his head was placed beneath the axe of the guillotine—his last thoughts being his God and his beloved wife. We are already aware of the persecutions the Duchess a second time endured from Collet d'Herbois, raised into power by the revolution, and destined to become one of its ministers.

There was, however, another enemy—Monsieur de Montaut—the Duchess had to fear, though she knew it not. This enemy, however, had no wish to bring her head beneath the guil-

lotine; for, the Duke having executed a deed bequeathing his estates and property to his wife, this Monsieur de Montaut would, as the Duke's cousin, upon her death, succeed to the property. As to the title, he cared not about it; he was a rank revolutionist, and titles were extinct; but he knew that if the Duchess were beheaded by order of the government, the estates would go to the nation. His object, therefore, was to secure the person of the Duchess, and, if he could not force her to marry him, he would, at all events, frighten her into executing a deed in his favour. Afterwards, as he possessed considerable power, he intended to connive at her escape to England, his party being at that time in the ascendancy.

By means of spies, Montaut ascertained that Jean Plessis had contrived to rescue the Duchess, a rescue he could not achieve. He traced her to Toulon, but was not able to discover for some days where she was concealed; but, having done so, he laid his plans for securing her person, and her daughter's also. Having succeeded, as

regarded the former, in the manner already related, the Duchess was carried, quite unconscious who was her abductor, to his chateau near Lyons, on the banks of the Rhone.

Monsieur de Montaut was a perfect stranger to the Duchess de Coulancourt. She thought herself in the power of Collet d'Herbois, and, in the midst of her cruel grief at being torn from her daughter, she yet congratulated herself that she had saved her child, and the casket of valuable jewels, together with many most important papers.

The chateau of Monsieur Gamel Maria de Montaut was some fourteen leagues from Lyons, seated on a slight eminence above the Rhone, and surrounded by dense woods.

Jean Plessis, with incredible energy and perseverance, had contrived to track the Duchess to her place of confinement. Satisfied that her person and life were safe, though in the power of a revolutionary chief, he returned to Toulon, with the intention of disposing of two or three houses, and then devote himself to the liberation

of Madame. The English fleet was still before Toulon, and, ascertaining that Mabel was on board the "Robust," with Madame Volney, he wrote the letter our hero received, and paid two fishermen, to deliver it on board the "Babet." Then, having disposed of his houses to a notary, and received the purchase-money, he contrived, by disguising himself, and becoming for the time a furious partisan of the Republic, to set about his schemes for the delivery of the Duchess from the power of Monsieur de Montaut, who was then one of the Republican commissioners in Lyons.

This would not have been difficult in the fearfully disorganised state of France, but, unfortunately, Jean Plessis became suspected, was suddenly arrested and thrown into prison, and was condemned to death; but, at that critical moment, Roberspierre and the Reign of Terror ceased to exist, and Montaut himself was dragged, with his colleagues, to the guillotine, and, amidst the shouts and rejoicings of the people, beheaded.

Madame De Coulancourt was conveyed to Paris, and remained some time confined in the Abbey. Finally, as things settled into tranquillity under the Directory, she was brought to trial. Nothing whatever appearing to criminate her she was released, and left in full possession of her estates, but strictly prohibited, under pain of forfeiture of her property and imprisonment, either to leave the country or in any way by letter or message to communicate with England.

Madame de Coulancourt, grateful to Providence for her preservation from so many perils, selected a handsome mansion in Paris for residence, where she looked forward with hope to peace to restore her daughter to her; her son she firmly believed to have been beheaded. Some months after Jean Plessis obtained his liberty, and soon learned by diligent enquiries the fate of Madame de Coulancourt, and at once set out for Paris, thus relieving Madame de Coulancourt's mind from great anxiety on his and his family's account, for she feared he had perished in attempting her deliverance.

CHAPTER III.

FIVE years have passed since Mabel Arden was placed under the care of Mrs. Sampson; and she was now seventeen years of age. For the last six months she had quitted school, and remained under the care and protection of Madame Volney, who, with her daughter Agatha, resided in a very pretty villa in the immediate vicinity of Southampton. Madame Volney's income was five hundred a year, having placed the large sum of money she had had bequeathed to her in the hands of Mr. Stanmore, who had invested it for her very advantageously.

The thousand pounds so generously left by Lieutenant O'Loughlin and our hero for Mabel's benefit, Mr. Stanmore also placed out at interest, and what the interest lacked in amount to discharge the expense of her schooling, the solicitor paid himself, so that the little capital remained untouched, Mr. Stanmore feeling satisfied that Mabel would in the end be able to establish her rights, and recover interest and principal out of the Etherton estates; but as to forcing Sir Godfrey to acknowledge his niece without certain proofs of her birth, &c., was out of the question.

About two years after the placing of Mabel at school Sir Godfrey Etherton became somewhat embarrassed, through the imprudence of his son-in-law, Lord Coldburgh and Philip Etherton, who were fast friends, the former having induced his brother-in-law to join him in a security for £14,000—racing debts—which his lordship declared were to be paid for out of the proceeds of an estate in Dorsetshire, to be sold immediately. Unfortunately his lordship's creditors, thinking

he lived much too fast, brought matters to a close, and laid hands on all the property, politely requesting Mr. Phillip Etherton to take up the bond for £14,000.

This Mr. Etherton could not do. Lord and Lady Coldburgh, in the end, were compelled to retire to a mansion his lordship possessed in Yorkshire and live (starve they styled it), on four hundred a year, the creditors having allowed them that sum from the property till the whole of the debts were paid off, which would not be for a term of fourteen years. Sir Godfrey Etherton had to pay a sum of £9,000, it being proved that part of the £14,000 included gambling debts of his son. The baronet felt this severely, being both a penurious and heartless man, for he was quite satisfied in his mind that Mabel was his niece; but he was in great hopes that having lost the contents of the casket, and her mother being, as he believed, guillotined, he should never hear more of her claims.

The baronet insisted on his son giving up his racing associates and extravagant mode of life,

fixing upon some wealthy heiress, and winding up his future by marriage. But Mr. Philip Etherton's career was destined to be a very short one; the year after, whilst shooting with a friend, in loading his double-barreled gun, the loaded barrel by some unaccountable accident went off, and the contents lodged in the brain of the unfortunate young man, killing him on the spot. This terrible catastrophe plunged the Etherton family into deep despondency. Sir Godfrey appeared to feel it as a judgment upon him for his cruelty and injustice to his orphan niece, and yet he strove in his own mind to convince himself that he acted from principle; "for why," he argued, "should I receive a young girl as my niece simply upon a woman's word, who may be, and no doubt is, an impostor?"

The baronet immediately after the death of his eldest son, removed Howard Etherton from the navy, and he returned home. Sir Godfrey's troubles and anxiety of mind respecting his brother's wife and child brought on a heart disease, and in less than five years from Mabel's resi-

dence in England he was gathered to his fathers, and Howard Etherton succeeded to the title and estates.

During those five years so eventful to the Etherton family, Mabel Arden was growing up into an exquisitely lovely and accomplished girl. The first two years she constantly looked forward to either hearing from or seeing her never forgotten mother, but as time passed on, and no tidings could be gained from France, convulsed as it was to its centre, and a fierce war raging between the two countries, she began to despair. As she advanced towards womanhood her feelings for her young protector she felt, though she scarcely knew how, were undergoing a great change; the childish love was maturing itself in her young and most affectionate heart. The mere mention of his name caused the rich blood to rush to her cheek, and a deep anxiety stole over her when news arrived of the English fleet, or engagements between any of the French and English ships. Four years had elapsed since she had seen William Thornton, as she still called him, though

convinced his real name was Oscar de Bracy, and that they were cousins.

To Mr. Stanmore's excessive vexation, news reached England of Sir Oscar de Bracy's death taking place at the Cape of Good Hope. The solicitor, fearing that such a catastrophe might occur, had taken the precaution to send out letters by a government vessel, detailing all the circumstances of our hero's story as related to him by Lieutenant O'Loughlin, by William Thornton, and Lord Hood's coxswain; as well as Madame Volney's account of the finding of the picture of himself round the neck of the child. In fact he omitted no circumstance likely to convince the most sceptical of the identity of William Thornton's being Sir Oscar de Bracy's son Whether the baronet received these letters and documents before his death Mr. Stanmore remained ignorant, and would remain so, till the frigate, that was under Sir Oscar's orders, should return to England. The lawyer was also aware that the baronet as governor of ——— must have accumulated a considerable sum, his large salary

and emoluments, together with a vast amount of prize money, would constitute a fortune in themselves. The Duchess de Coulancourt, therefore, in default of heirs direct, would no doubt be entitled to his property if he died without a will.

Mabel Arden felt acutely, particularly on our hero's account, this untoward event of Sir Oscar de Bracy's death. She knew he would deeply deplore it, for his most ardent desire was to be acknowledged by his father. The last letters Mabel and Agatha Volney had received from the two friends, were just previous to the "Diamond" frigate's visit to Brest harbour. William Thornton wrote with all the sincerity and truth of an affectionate brother; the fondest sister could find no fault with the tone and tenor of his long and affectionate letter. But there was nothing of love in it, how could there be? She was scarcely more than thirteen when they parted, and yet Mabel was in her heart disappointed; and her cheeks glowed as she detected her feelings.

Agatha Volney, a light-hearted, affectionate generous girl, loved her intended husband, Lieutenant O'Loughlin, with true affection, and looked forward with cheerfulness and hope to his being made a commander—the time fixed upon for their union.

William Thornton, in his letter, observing that delays were dangerous, playfully hinted that O'Loughlin's whiskers were turning into a greyish tint, and that if Agatha waited ten years longer, they would be of a uniform colour, and the Commandership still in the clouds.

Not long after the receipt of these letters, the inmates of the villa, were startled, and most agreeably surprised, by the entrance of O'Loughlin himself. Agatha and Mabel were alone in the drawing-room when he entered; before a word could be said he threw his arm round the blushing, but delighted Agatha, and kissed her with fond affection, saying:—

"I am entitled to this, I am, by Jove; I have been made Commander."

Then looking around, he perceived, the tall and graceful form of Mabel Arden; he gazed at her for a moment bewildered; her extreme loveliness, and sweet expressive features, amazed him:

"Impossible!" he exclaimed, "and yet the eyes are those of Miss Arden."

"Yes," said Mabel, with her sweet, captivating smile, and extending her hand to the delighted sailor; "I am Mabel; you cannot have forgotten the little deserted girl you so generously and nobly protected."

"Forgot!" exclaimed the sailor, kissing the hand held out to him, "that would be impossible. St. Patrick, if William were here, he would no longer say you were—hem—hem—"

Commander O'Loughlin coughed; he was on the point of saying his friend Thornton thought the beautiful girl before him was plain.

Mabel laughed, and shaking her head, she said playfully:—

"Oh, I know that dear William thinks his

little sister is plain. What then? beauty is not the lot of all."

"Beauty!" exclaimed O'Loughlin, "by the immortal Gods—"

"Take care," exclaimed Agatha Volney, shaking her finger at her lover, "how you call upon the immortal Gods in speaking of the beauty of any other fair one, except your liege lady's; so sit down, quietly and contentedly, and tell us about yourself and friend, and relate all your wonderful adventures."

The delighted O'Loughlin sat down beside his fair betrothed, with Mabel on the other side, and commenced a recital of the several events that had occurred since their separation.

Before he had concluded Madame Volney and Mr. Stanmore were announced.

Mr. Stanmore informed his friends of the arrival of the frigate from the Cape, saying:

"I am happy to tell you she brings all the necessary documents, papers, &c., that I was so very anxious about. Most fortunately, or rather,

providentially, my letters reached Sir Oscar before his death, and their contents imparted to his last hours soothing gratification and consolation, and his life was spared to complete and sign every necessary paper before proper witnesses. I will show you by-and-bye, his letter to me. It seems he was not aware that his sister was alive and had married a Mr. Granby Arden, and afterwards became Duchess of Coulancourt, by a second marriage with a French duke, and that she had a daughter living. He made his will, drawn up by an eminent solicitor at the Cape, and finally disposed of his immense property; acknowledging with grateful thanks, the goodness of Providence in permitting him to recognise and acknowledge William Thornton as his son and heir."

"I see no difficulty," continued Mr. Stanmore, "in proving Mr. Thornton's right to the name and title of Sir Oscar De Bracy. The will shall be opened and read in a few days, and I wish you, Commander O'Loughlin, to be present."

We will here merely state the principal points

in the will of the late Sir Oscar De Bracy, excepting a legacy of ten thousand pounds to his niece, Mabel Arden, five thousand to Mr. Patrick O'Loughlin, and a thousand each to his two solicitors, and ample donations to four attached domestics, the whole of his estates and remaining property were bequeathed to his son, known as William Thornton.

To his will was added a solemn declaration, before four witnesses, that he felt perfectly satisfied and convinced that the proofs of his son's preservation and his identity with William Thornton, were most satisfactorily explained, and most clear as to dates, and that the picture found round the child's neck was one he left with Lady De Bracy, a short period before his departure for India.

Captain O'Loughlin was greatly moved by this last mark of Sir Oscar's esteem and remembrance, whilst Mabel deeply deplored that one so kind-hearted and noble, should have undergone such trials; and that, just as his heart became relieved by the joyous intelligence received of his

son's being still in existence, when life would have been a boon, the destroyer should have laid his hand on his victim.

"But we are not to murmur," she said, "it is not upon earth we are to seek or expect our reward for trials; we must look higher."

Captain O'Loughlin's marriage was postponed for twelve months. Neither he nor Agatha could think of their union taking place till the usual time for mourning for his generous benefactor had expired.

Three weeks passed calmly and pleasantly with Agatha Volney and her lover, who by this time had become an excellent French scholar; though Agatha excelled him in her knowledge of the English language. Mabel was anxious to hear some news of our hero; for generally the frigates cruising off the French ports returned at intervals to Plymouth and Falmouth, or vessels arrived with intelligence of their movements.

One morning Captain O'Loughlin, who was remaining at Southampton, and generally walked

to the villa to breakfast, took a *Times* newspaper from his pocket.

"I have not had time to look at the naval intelligence this morning," said the Captain, "and I am really anxious—"

"And so am I," said Mabel, with a slight increase of colour, "there has been no news of any kind for many days."

"Ha! be the immortal powers, this is startling!"

"What is it?" exclaimed Mabel, looking pale and frightened, at seeing the evident agitation of Captain O'Loughlin. "Pray do not hide any thing from me, Mr. O'Loughlin; you are reading of some mishap to the 'Diamond.'"

Captain O'Loughlin did look not only anxious, but exceedingly excited; but having incautiously spoken out, he thought the best plan would be to state the facts. So taking the paper, he read out a rather startling account of the capture of Sir Sidney Smith, Lieutenant Thornton, and Midshipman Westley Wright, in an attempt to cut out the celebrated privateer,

"Vengeance," from Havre, besides naming several men, either killed, wounded, or prisoners.

"The 'Diamond' cruised for several days off the coast," continued the paper, "and the night after the unfortunate capture of Sir Sidney, those on board the frigate saw a vessel on fire in-shore, but before the 'Diamond' could stand in sufficiently to make her out, the vessel must have been run ashore or consumed."

"Ha!" exclaimed Captain O'Loughlin, after a brief pause, "here is later intelligence, headed 'Mysterious circumstance respecting the gallant attempt to cut out the 'Vengeance' from the inner port of Havre.'"

"Two days," continued the paper, "after the capture of the gallant Sir Sidney, and his equally high spirited officer, Lieutenant Thornton, whose name has already been several times before the public for gallant enterprises and fortunate results, the 'Diamond' frigate seized a small fishing lugger out of Havre, for the purpose of gaining some intelligence of Sir Sid ney, his officers, and crew.

"The Captain of the lugger was very willing to communicate all he knew; but he said he was mystified himself with respect to the cutting out of the "Vengeance," though he was on the spot the whole time; he knew that one officer and a young midshipman were landed at Havre, and marched on with their men to Rouen; he did not know whether there was any other officer left on board the "Vengeance," but certainly only the Captain and midshipman were landed, for he saw them himself.

"'Late in the evening,' continued the Frenchman, 'Captain Gaudet, the skipper of the "Vengeance," his mate, and the crew, came ashore, excepting four or five of the men left to take care of the Privateer till their return with powder and shot, there being very little on board. About two hours after their arrival, a gun was fired, which gave the alarm to Captain Gaudet and his mate, and they at once started in their boats for their craft, but the vessels was under weigh, and nearly out of port.'

"'They pursued, and fired into her with

muskets, and the fort was alarmed; but the lugger got clear away, and Captain Gaudet returned, cursing and swearing at his ill-luck, but giving no explanation, that he heard.

"'The very next day news arrived in Havre that the 'Vengeance' had run ashore on Lyon Head Point in a sheet of flame, and was nearly consumed to the water's edge, but not a human being was to be seen by the fishermen, who, as soon as it was day-light, clambered down the cliffs, where her entire hull was visible when the tide receded.

"'I sailed two hours after this intelligence arrived,' continued the Captain of the fishing lugger, 'therefore am quite unable to explain the mystery of the transaction.' He also stated that Sir Sidney and his men had captured the "Vengeance," but that wind and tide were against their taking her out; that they defended her in the most gallant manner, against overwhelming odds, for boats full of soldiers were sent out against them, besides an armed lugger.'

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mabel, her face

very pale, and her voice trembling with emotion. "Can you understand, Captain O'Loughlin, what could have become of Lieutenant Thornton?"

"It is certainly very singular, and not very easily explained," said Captain O'Loughlin. "Still, it appears to me that someway or another William Thornton must have taken the 'Vengeance' to sea; who else could, for he was not taken ashore with Sir Sidney and the others, and there was no officer even wounded except midshipman Beecroft. How the 'Vengeance' caught fire it is impossible for me to say, but if William was in her he has got ashore, and I should not be surprised but that with his knowledge of the French language he may manage to get safe out of the country. I wish to God I had been in the 'Diamond;' I should have been tempted to run in to their rescue, even if I had lost the frigate in the attempt. But do not, I beg you, Mabel, take this so much to heart; I have every confidence in the gallantry and ingenuity of my friend; he will, if he is in France, work his way out of it.

I wish I was with him. I am more vexed than I can tell you. I hoped when appointed to a ship to have had him for my first lieutenant; his interest with Lord Hood, and his own gallantry, would have made him a Commander in six months."

"But with his fortune and rank," said Mabel, seriously, "why should he continue in the navy?"

"My dear Mabel," said Agatha Volney, "neither rank nor wealth would have the least effect on Sir Oscar De Bracy, for I think we ought to give him the name he is entitled to; rank or fortune would weigh nothing in the balance with honour and glory. The navy is his pride and delight."

"Be St. Patrick, you are right, Agatha!" said Captain O'Loughlin. "If you were to ask him which he would give up, wealth or profession, be the powers of war, he would say without hesitation, wealth, my beauty!"

"And pray, Mr., or rather Captain O'Lough-

lin," said Agatha, "if you were asked which you would give up, your profession or Miss Agatha Volney, I suppose it would be—'Be the powers of war, you, my beauty!'"

"Ah, you little deceiver!" said the Captain. "You know deuced well which way the vane would turn. Now, if my gallant young friend were once fairly caught in Cupid's meshes, to the deuce with the profession, when that wicked deceiver hoists his flag."

"And do you pretend to tell me, most redoubtable Commander," said Agatha, demurely, "that you were never in love before, and you in your twenty-seventh year?"

"Faith, I can't say that, fair Agatha," said the Captain, with a smile. "You know I was six years a middy, and a mid is perpetually in love, that is when he gets ashore, and sees a petticoat fluttering in the wind. But I must be off to London to-night; try and console Mabel, she looks very unhappy (our heroine had retired, leaving the lovers together), upon my conscience

I'm afraid her little heart is beating with something more than cousinly love for my handsome friend."

"And why should you say afraid?" asked Agatha. "Is there a lovelier girl in Great Britain than Mabel. When we spent a month at my sister's, she was the admiration of all the visitors, and at the Great Election Ball at Exeter she created universal admiration. She could if she pleased have had the choice of two coronets."

"I know that," said Captain O'Loughlin; "and I say with you that a more beautiful, or more amiable maiden there is not to be found; but you see, William—that is Sir Oscar—I shall hail him under his right name; but as I was saying Sir Oscar is one of the handsomest men you probably ever saw; the women are all in love with him. Whenever we get ashore, and mix in society, he cuts us all out, and you see he's rather, I must confess, a leetle volatile—black, brown, and fair —and when I talk to him of Mabel he says, 'I dare say she is a very nice amiable girl; but it's

preposterous to fancy myself in love with a little thing of thirteen. I love her with all my heart as a sister.' "

"I think, Master O'Loughlin," said Agatha, with a smile, and shaking her finger at the Captain, who immediately got possession of it, "I think you have been rather a giddy pair in the Cupid line; but I tell you what, I should like Sir Oscar should see our dear Mabel without knowing who she was, I would venture my hand, which, by the bye, you are squeezing very hard —recollect my fingers are not ropes!"

"No, faith, nor those ruby lips marling spikes!"

"Come," interrupted Agatha, jumping up with cheeks like a peony; "it is time you should go to London. I am afraid you will make but a very bad Commander."

"When I strike my colours to you, my sweet girl," said the gallant Captain, gaily, "my commandership ceases; from that time I obey, not command!"

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Etherton sincerely and deeply deplored the loss of her husband, for she really loved him; to her, his faults were in a measure hidden. But, alas, this was not the case with his daughters. A show of grief and an elaborate display in mourning was paraded before the world, but in their hearts they felt themselves emancipated from a restraint they styled tyranny. The girls fancied they would now be permitted to mix more with the world, and that after a time Etherton Hall would be filled with gay guests, and that their brother Howard would let them

do as they liked. But a very short time proved to the five girls that they had woefully miscalculated. The new baronet was a man of an infinitely worse temper and disposition than his sire, and for one so young was penurious to a degree, and so haughty and arrogant in manners and words, that the domestics in comparing notes, really found that they had been very unjust towards the deceased Baronet, who, compared to his son, was really an amiable man.

The late baronet had kept up a handsome establishment, and, though particular and careful in his expenditure, he lived as became his rank and wealth. His successor diminished the establishment. Lady Etherton had a handsome jointure, but her daughters were, strange to say, left almost to the mercy of the brother. They each had a female attendant, and the two eldest had saddle horses kept for their special use. Sir Howard, having deliberately dismissed three of the female attendants, and sold the saddle horses, and clipped various other sine-

cures, as he styled them, on the plea that the estate was greatly encumbered by the extravagance of his elder brother, told his sisters that, if they expected fortunes, they would be very small ones, unless they economised at home. Lady Etherton remonstrated, and, after six months' trial of her son's mode of management, left Etherton Hall, and went with her favourite daughter to Bath; where, having an income of twelve hundred a-year, she lived remarkably well, and enjoyed society.

Sir Howard Etherton, having got rid of his mother and eldest sister, established his sister Jane as mistress of his establishment. This young lady, the plainest of the five, greatly resembled her brother in disposition, and, finding it was useless to complain, adopted the plan of coinciding with him in all his ideas and projects. The three younger girls had henceforward two tyrants instead of one.

Sir Howard Etherton was quite the reverse of his brother Phillip, who loved hunters and race-horses, women and wine. The baronet

cared for none of these agreeable modes of dissipating a fortune. He had no objection to females, certainly, but they must be encumbered with large fortunes, of which he was extremely willing to take charge; but Miss Jane Etherton was in no hurry that her brother should find a wife until she had found a husband—a thing her youngest sister, Mary, who was a very pretty girl, told her, in a fit of passion at being thwarted in some wish, she would never get, as no man in his senses would marry a woman with such a nose.

Miss Jane's prominent organ was a serious feature in her face, and troubled her very much. It was marvellously long, fearfully thin, and the point awfully red, whilst her face was extremely pale. Mary had good reason to repent her remark, for it was never forgotten.

One morning Sir Howard Etherton looked very troubled and serious at breakfast, and, as soon as he was alone with his sister Jane, she remarked it.

"Yes," returned the Baronet, "what I heard

yesterday is enough to make me look serious, and, in fact, to make us all look so."

"What can it be?" said Miss Jane, the tip of her nose betraying her anxiety by increasing in colour. It seemed as if this organ alone betrayed her emotions, for her cheeks remained always colourless.

"You remember, of course, going to London with your father to see a young lady who styled herself his niece. He was to hear the contents of some papers contained in a casket, which that officious, proud fellow—who now, forsooth, claims to be Sir Oscar de Bracy—had the care of; a most confounded piece of imposture, depend upon it. But no matter about that now."

"Dear me!" interrupted Miss Jane, "I remember about this Mabel Arden, as she called herself. Yes, we went to London, but it all turned out a hoax—there were nothing but shavings in the casket. My poor father was most vilely treated by a horrid Irish seaman, who used violent language. If he had been a

gentleman my father intended horse-whipping him, but, on enquiry, he learned that he was nobody, so of course he never took any further notice of him, or the pretended Mabel Arden."

"You are extremely eloquent this morning, Jane," said the Baronet, with a caustic sneer, for even his pet sister was subject to his fits of spleen; "but you are quite out, I fear, in your ideas respecting Mabel Arden. I will read you my solicitor's letter, which I received yesterday evening;" and, putting his hand into his pocket-book, he pulled out a letter, which he read aloud:

"My Dear Sir,

"I have just received a communication from Mr. Stanmore, solicitor, —— Square, that surprises me. He states that it is his intention to assert the claims of Miss Mabel Arden to the name of Etherton, and to the portion, with interest, that she became entitled to on the death of Sir Granby Etherton. This is serious, for I find, on looking over your

lamented father's papers, and reading some deeds and documents, that when your father succeeded to the title and estates, a sum of twenty thousand pounds ought to have been put aside at once as the future fortune of any daughters, living at the time of his succession.

"I always understood that your father's elder brother died unmarried, consequently this twenty thousand pounds became a settlement to be divided between your sisters, each receiving a portion, with interest according to age, out of the estates. But now it appears, from Mr. Stanmore's letter, that the late Mr. Granby Arden was married, and left two children, a son and daughter. The son it is supposed"—("He marks the word 'supposed,'" said Sir Howard, bitterly, looking up at his attentive sister)—"the son, it is supposed, perished at Lyons during the sacking of that city, but the daughter lives, and he declares Miss Mabel Arden to be that daughter. Now, if he can substantiate this to be the case, it will cost the Etherton estates a sum, with principal and

simple interest, of nearly thirty-two thousand pounds. Pray let me see you as soon as possible, that I may know how to proceed and act.

"Yours faithfully,

"C. D. THORPE."

"Dear me, I am astonished!" said Miss Jane, as her brother folded the letter, with a very gloomy brow. "What do you intend doing? Do you really believe this girl to be the daughter of our Uncle Arden?"

"I do," returned the Baronet, sharply; "but I cannot see how she or anyone else can prove her right and title to the name of Arden. Sir Oscar de Bracy, the late Governor of ———, in India, has left her ten thousand pounds, perfectly satisfied that she was his niece. Curse that meddling coxswain's son or *protegée*, which you please, that now claims the title and property of the Governor of ——; but," added the Baronet, exultingly, "he's a prisoner in France, or at the bottom of the ocean perhaps, for nothing certain is known of him. He it was

that saved this girl's life; at all events, he brought her and the casket out of Toulon, whereas, if he had not interfered, she would very likely have perished with her mother, who called herself the Duchess of Coulancourt."

Miss Jane Etherton was evidently either not blessed with a woman's heart, or she concealed her feelings—her nose only betraying some little sensation.

"What do you intend doing, Howard?" asked Miss Jane.

"Force her solicitor to produce proofs, of course," and then, after a moment's thought, he continued, "it would be a good speculation to make her my wife."

Miss Jane's prominent feature became so extremely red, that even her brother remarked, with a malicious laugh:

"Upon my word, Jane, your nose is quite a barometer; it states the effect of your feelings."

Jane did not like the remark, and being quite as caustic as her brother, she replied:

"I am glad that in the midst of your troubles,

and I think you will find them difficult to get over, that you have room for ridiculous remarks."

"Tut," laughed the Baronet, "you take a joke too seriously; but do you know, did you ever hear, what kind of girl this Mabel is; when a child, she was a puny, pale-faced, half-starved looking thing."

"I know nothing about her," returned Miss Jane, sharply. "I suppose you can get a look at her if you like; I heard Ellen Goodridge say, who knows the Volneys, and visits at Madame's Villa, she was well enough, but very shy and serious."

"So much the better; qualities I should admire in a wife. One of those Volney girls I understand is going to be married to that Irishman O'Loughlin, who has just been made a Commander. He has impudence and brass enough for anything; but how a high family like the Volneys can tolerate a fellow, whom I myself heard say, he 'never had a father or a mother, and that his huge fist, was father, mother, and

grand-mother to him, and a whole host of relations besides'—I can't comprehend."

"Horrid savage!" said Miss Jane, "What is he like? a sedan-chair man, I suppose? All the sedan-chair men in London are Irishmen—they have such large legs."

"Which is the reason they are selected by the fashionable ladies," said the Baronet; "to sport behind their carriages, with calves to their legs like Swedish turnips."

As the Baronet said these words, the door opened, and a domestic entered the room with a card on a silver salver.

"A gentleman below, sir, in the reception-room, wishes particularly to see you."

Sir Howard Etherton took the card, gave a slight start, changing colour as he read aloud, "Captain O'Loughlin."

Miss Jane sprang from her seat, as if it and not her nose was red hot, exclaiming:

"Bless me, how extraordinary! What can this horrid man want! You will surely not see him!"

The servant stared, for he could scarcely think that the tall and handsome man, in the undress uniform of a commander in the navy, could possibly be the horrid man, Miss Jane alluded to.

Sir Howard, remembering of old the contempt that O'Loughlin held him in, and how he himself detested him, hesitated whether he would see him or not; but suddenly making up his mind he said:

"Shew Captain O'Loughlin up."

"Dear me," ejaculated Jane; "I must be gone, I am in such dishabille."

"Stay where you are," said the Baronet, sharply; he preferred not being alone. "It is only that horrid Irishman we have been talking of."

It was too late to retreat, for a firm, active step was heard without; the next moment Captain O'Loughlin entered the room, in his easy off-hand, but gentlemanly manner. He paused on seeing Miss Jane Etherton, but Sir Howard in a cold, constrained manner, said:

"My sister, Captain O'Loughlin."

The sailor bowed, and taking a chair, said:

"It is some years, Sir Howard, since we parted, and I must candidly say, I did not expect that we should meet again; but having a strong desire to be of service to a most amiable young lady, I was prevailed upon to wait upon you. Therefore, at the request of Miss Arden, whose generous nature shrinks from the prospect of law proceedings between near relations, and that her name should come before the public on a question of birth—"

"I confess," interrupted the Baronet, "I do not quite understand you, Captain O'Loughlin; I have no near relations beyond my own family that I know of."

"A very few words more," observed O'Loughlin, haughtily, "will explain my meaning. Miss Arden, or rather Etherton, as she is entitled to bear that name, requests me to say, that provided there is no opposition to her claims, on your part, or to her assuming the rightful name, and no doubts raised about her birth, she is

quite willing to resign all claims to her portion of the Etherton property you now hold."

"In other words, Captain O'Loughlin," interrupted the Baronet, in a cutting tone; "you offer me a bribe to acknowledge an impostor, as my cousin."

The eyes of the Irishman flashed dangerously, as the Baronet, who saw the coming storm, hastened to add: "Such may, I say, be the case, for who can tell. It would be against my conscience."

"Oh! to the—then," muttered O'Loughlin; seeing a lady present, he merely said, "Oh, do not distress your conscience, Sir Howard. When we two served on board the old 'Victory,' you were not much troubled with that scarce commodity. Now"—

"I will thank you, Captain O'Loughlin," interrupted Sir Howard, with a flush upon his cheek, rivaling the hue on the nose of his astonished sister, "to confine yourself to the object of your visit. All I have to say is, that I will

never acknowledge the young person you speak of as relative of mine, till the very fullest proofs of her birth are furnished. There are no proofs of Mr. Granby Arden having contracted marriage with any lady; therefore, once for all, I tell you, I shall oppose the person calling herself Mabel Arden, claiming the name of Etherton, to the full extent of my power."

"By the powers of love, you are welcome to do so; I am glad to hear it;" his cheek flushing anger and contempt as he rose from his seat. "You will be sorry for this, ere long. I was against making you the offer, because we know that Miss Arden's mother, the Duchess of Coulancourt, is now in Paris, restored to her estates, and living under the protection of the Directory—"

The Baronet started, and evidently changed colour, but Captain O'Loughlin continued quite unconcerned. "Therefore, though there may be a little delay in communicating with Madame Coulancourt, and some caution, as the Directory are stringent, respecting communication

with England, we shall be able to obtain all the particulars of her marriage, and the birth of her two children. By the bye, it has been whispered that young Julian Arden, supposed to have perished at the siege of Lyons, escaped, or at all events there is no proof of his death. So now, having fulfilled the wishes of Miss Arden, and relieved her feelings of regret at proceeding against you in this case, without first amicably trying to settle it, I shall wish you good morning," and with a cold bow to the stupified Miss Jane, whose thin nose became purple, whilst her cheeks grew proportionately paler, Captain O'Loughlin walked out of the room with a light and easy step, and as he descended the stairs, the confounded and bewildered Baronet caught the sound of his voice, humming the air of "The girl I left behind me."

Captain O'Loughlin passing out from the house, mounted his horse, that a groom held, satisfied in his mind that he had left the honorable Baronet quite sufficient to employ his thoughts.

"Confound the fellow, I always disliked him," he muttered, as he rode down the avenue; "every-one gives him a worse character than his father."

Captain O'Loughlin had undertaken this visit to Sir Howard Etherton at Mabel's earnest request. Most important intelligence had reached Madame Volney from Paris relative to her own affairs. Her letters came through Hamburgh. The correspondent mentioned as a piece of news, that Madame Coulancourt, formerly Duchess de Coulancourt, was living in Paris, and had had her estates restored to her, but that she was under strict surveillance—there was no other remark in the letter, but this was quite sufficient to fill Mabel's heart with rapturous joy. Her beloved mother was living and well; this knowledge seemed to her the greatest boon Providence could bestow upon her.

Mr. Stanmore was extremely anxious, when he heard the intelligence, that some mode of communication might be contrived with Madame de Coulancourt, so that Mabel's birth could be clearly established, as this would be

absolutely necessary to substantiate her claims to her uncle's legacy. Mr. Stanmore, however, was made aware by Madame Volney that any attempt to correspond with Mabel's mother would subject her to the utmost rigour of the French Government.

"At all events," said the Solicitor; "I will try a feeler to Sir Howard Etherton's solicitor," and he did, but Mabel, who could not bear to make her name and position a subject of public conversation by enforcing her claims, without having a single proof to bring forward, begged Captain O'Loughlin to try and bring Sir Howard Etherton to amicable terms. She was quite willing to relinquish all claim on the Etherton property provided Sir Howard offered no opposition to her being publicly known as the niece of Sir Oscar de Bracy, and the daughter of Mr. Granby Arden.

Captain O'Loughlin undertook the embassy to Sir Howard Etherton; and knowing that gentleman's penurious disposition, he thought he would eagerly grasp at the large sum of money he

would gain by his compliance, though the Captain grumbled terribly at such a sacrifice on Mabel's part. Mabel insisted that it would be a very hard case for Sir Howard to have to pay that sum; so, to satisfy her, he rode over to Etherton Hall, and returned quite pleased at having failed, for he would not be persuaded that Mabel had any right to forego, or abandon her natural rights. About fourteen or fifteen days after this interview Captain O'Loughlin was appointed to the command of a very handsome and dashing corvette, the Onyx, and had orders to sail immediately and join the ships, under Vice Admiral Colboy, cruizing off Brest.

After a most affectionate leave-taking with his betrothed and Mabel, Captain O'Loughlin proceeded to join his ship. In our next chapter we return to our Hero and his attached follower, Bill Saunders.

CHAPTER V.

We left Lieutenant Thornton and Bill Saunders scrambling over the rough rocks, after swimming from the sunken lugger. It was not yet day-break, and our hero was anxious to get as far from the wreck as possible. They never thought of the man whom they had left on board; and whether he swam ashore, or perished by drowning they knew not. It was a remarkably rough road over those rocks, and Bill Saunders as he stumbled and bruised his shins against the sharp stones, vowed vengeance against the first Monsieur he could conveniently knock on the head;

declaring that all their misfortunes arose from not pitching the two Frenchmen, who sought refuge in the fore cuddy of the lugger, overboard; had he done so, they could not have set the lugger on fire.

To add to Bill's dissatisfaction and vexation, the garments he had put on were those of a middle sized man,—Bill, like his master, was six feet,—and being soaked through, they clung to him so tightly that he could hardly walk.

"Serve me right," growled Bill, "I'm sailing under false colours; the beggar that owned these clothes had legs no bigger than handspikes."

Just as day began to dawn, they had passed over all the rocks, and come upon a fine sandy beach, and right before them appeared a long range of lofty sand hills. As the sun rose, our hero paused between two of these sand hills, covered here and there with stunted marine plants.

"Now, Bill," he observed, turning to his companion, and observing with a smile the

oddity of his appearance, his trousers scarcely reaching his knees, his coat too short, and stretched to bursting, and on his head a red cap, like a night cap; "why, Bill, you made but a bad fit of it last night; your garments are far too small."

"Small!" repeated Bill, with infinite disgust, looking down at his powerful limbs, encased so tightly from the wet, that they seemed a part of his skin. "They ain't fit, sir, for a powder monkey. There was no time, you know, to try others; it's very lucky your honour found the skipper's; he was a tall powerful brute; but I had no such luck."

"Never mind, Bill, they will fit better when dry, and as I have secured some cash from the skipper's desk—fair spoil in war—I will soon new rig you when we get to a town; but mind, you must not speak a word; I shall pass you off as being dumb."

Bill smiled grimly and clenched his huge hand.

"Yes, sir, all right; I'll be dumb enough,

seeing as how I don't understand their confounded parley-voo; but they had better keep their hands off me; I'll never spare a couple of lubbers again, if I can get my fingers round their throats."

"Well, now pull off your garments, here's a fine hot April sun; they will dry in less than an hour."

"Never get them off, sir, without a knife. Let them dry where they are; it's all the same to me. Just let me dry your clothes, sir."

"It is not likely we shall be intruded on here," said Lieutenant Thornton, sticking his jacket on a stunted shrub; "and I think, after we cross this line of sand hills, we shall not be more than three miles from Fecamp, where with a little skill and management, we may be able to seize a fishing boat, and put to sea."

"But what are we to do for grub, sir? I feel rather queer as it is."

"I can purchase some food," said the Lieutenant, "at the first cottage we come to; only mind, not a word."

Just then Bill beheld a rabbit, and gave chase; pitched his cap and then his shoes at it, and finally, with exceeding chagrin, saw it dart into a hole.

"Why, Bill, you never dreamt of running down a rabbit; you have burst your trousers."

Bill cast a rueful glance at a fragment of cloth that fluttered in the wind.

"The beggar carried too much sail, sir. I thought we might roast him over a few sticks."

"But we are not Indians, Bill, and have not their skill in eliciting fire from two pieces of wood. Here is some twine I found in this jacket; you had better take in that rent you have made."

Bill sat down; thanks to his chase after the rabbit, he could get off his garments, and being ingenious, when he had dried, he contrived to lengthen them, and patch them up, and after another hour's rest, they resumed their journey, with dry clothes. The sun was exceedingly hot for the time of year, especially amongst the sand hills.

By this time our travellers were ravenously hungry, having been twenty-four hours without food; all they partook of on board the lugger being wine and brandy. The sand hills were three miles across from north to south, and appeared to extend for many miles along the coast. From the summit of one, the highest of the group, they obtained a fine clear view of the country beyond, which appeared well wooded and cultivated, with a village spire peeping out from a clump of trees.

"I suppose yonder village is Fecamp," said our hero, "at least I judge so, from the look I took at the chart on the unlucky day we ran in to cut out that confounded lugger."

"I hope we shall be able to get some grog, sir; upon my conscience, your honour, I'm as empty as a dry water cask."

"I will get you plenty of food, Bill, only keep your mouth shut."

"Whilst I'm eating, sir," said Bill, with a grin.

Accordingly they made direct for the village.

They passed several of the country people on their way, who looked at the two powerful men with evident curiosity. They at last got in the high road from the village to some other place, and presently met two very neatly attired country girls with light baskets on their arms, and a farmer's market cart driven by a young lad following. Lieutenant Thornton stopped and enquired the name of the village before them from one of the girls, a young and very pretty one.

The girl looked at the lieutenant with considerable surprise, saying with a curtsey:

"Ceaux, Monsieur;" and then adding with some slight hesitation, "you are strangers?"

"Yes," returned William Thornton, "we have just been landed from an English vessel of war. Is there a caberet in the village, my pretty maid?"

"Well, no there is not, Monsieur," she replied; "but as you are strangers and may be far from your home, if you go to the house of Dame Moret and say her daughter directed you

there, she will, I know, give you food and lodging for the asking."

"Thank you, my good girl, I will do so, and not forget your pretty face when I get there. Are you going far?"

The young girl smiled, and said:

"Only to Havre, Monsieur."

"Havre!" repeated the lieutenant with surprise, "why are we so close to Havre?"

Bill, at this time, was eyeing the eggs and fowls with a ravenous eye. After again thanking the girl the lieutenant moved on.

"So," said our hero, "we are only three or four miles from Havre after all; too close to be pleasant."

The fact is they had merely doubled the east Head, where the land took a curve inwards. After a short walk they approached the village, which in truth consisted of a few small cottages and a large and comfortable farm house and buildings. A lad pointed to the large house as Dame Moret's when asked. In the front were congregated several cows, and a girl milking

them; sundry other farm animals in the shape of turkeys and fowls, which a very nice and respectable looking old woman was carefully feeding, keeping away the old birds that the young might have fair play.

The Dame looked up as Lieutenant Thornton approached, which enabled a sage looking old turkey cock to walk off with the entire of a large barley cake she was breaking up for the young birds.

"*Ma foi*," exclaimed the old dame, making a grab at his tail, "*vous êtes un grand voleur, Maitre Jaques.*"

Bill thought the barley cake much too good for "Maitre Jacques," so he grabbed at him and got the cake, which proceeding created an immense row amongst the turkeys; but Bill very quietly commenced demolishing the cake, looking as innocent as a child.

"*Mon Dieu*," said the dame laughing, "you are worse than *Maitre Jaques*; had you no breakfast, *pauvre homme*?"

"No, Dame," said our hero laughing, and

trying to be heard in the din that ensued amongst the poultry. "Your good daughter recommended us to come here, as there is no cabaret in this village. We have been landed from an English ship. We have money to pay you for what you give us."

"*Ah, Ca!* keep your money my handsome lad. We can afford to give you something to eat and drink, without robbing Maitre Jacques of his breakfast. Where did you meet my girl?"

"About a mile from here," said the Lieutenant.

"You are a stranger to these parts," said the dame, dismissing her anxious audience with a shake of her apron, "come with me into the house."

Lieutenant Thornton and Bill followed the dame into the kitchen of the farm house, where a huge iron pot was boiling over a roaring log fire in a wide chimney, and a girl stirring the contents with a large ladle. The smell from the steam made Bill Saunders's eyes water, and for-

getting his being a dummy, he rubbed his huge hands, saying:

"My eyes, here's a smell!" and then seeing by the look of our hero that he had committed an indiscretion, for the old dame looked at him in surprise, he coughed with such vehemence as to startle a curly haired dog enjoying himself at the fire, out of all propriety, for he flew at Bill instantly.

"Eh!" said Dame Moret, "what does your comrade say?" looking into Lieutenant Thornton's face.

"He's a Dutchman," said our hero, scarcely able to keep from laughing at the grotesque efforts Bill was making to cover his mistake.

"Dutchman!" said the old dame, "very like English. I had a noble lady once for a mistress," and the dame sighed, "and she was English, though her second husband was a Frenchman. But sit down; I love the English, and if he, or you either are English, you are quite safe with me. To tell the truth, though you do speak the language very well, you don't look

like Frenchmen, and your big comrade seems like a man squeezed into a boy's clothes."

"Well, Dame," returned our hero, struck forcibly by the woman's words, "I will not deceive you, we are English."

"Ah! Monsieur, you will upset the pot," said the dame turning round, for Bill seeing the girl trying to lift the heavy utensil, and the girl being a very good looking one, went to help her, instigated by the cravings of his stomach, which prompted a speedy replenishing. But Bill very scientifically finished the operation, put the logs together, and laughing gave the girl a kiss, for which he received a box in the face by the laughing and by no means displeased damsel, for Bill was a very handsome specimen of an English tar.

"I had better put you both into my little parlour," said Dame Moret with a smile, "for the girls and the men will be coming in to their mid-day meal; and this comrade of yours, Monsieur, for I see you are not of the same grade, will probably betray you, and that would not do."

"You must be more discreet, Bill," said our hero seriously, after the good dame had left them in a neat little chamber as clean as a new pin, with some pretty plants creeping all over the window, and an image of some saint in a glass case over the little chimney piece.

"I thought to pass you off for a Dutchman when you so indiscreetly showed that you were neither dumb nor blind. You must not be kissing the girls that way."

"Me a Dutchman, your honour!" said Bill trying to look behind him, "Lord love ye, sir, I'm not Dutch built; and as to kissing the girl, 'twas the force of hunger. It's human nature, we must have food, sir, of some kind."

"Well, I agree with you there, Bill, though I never classed kisses with our other articles of consumption for the stomach. But in future be steady, for I assure you a head is worth very little in France at this moment."

"Well, blow me if they shall have my head or tail either," said Bill, putting his hand up to

see if his pig tail, which he had thrust under the collar of his jacket was safe.

Dame Moret just then entered the room, with a smoking hot dish of what we should call in England a beggar's dish, or Irish stew. This she placed on a clean cloth, with two wooden platters and knives and forks. There was so much genuine kindness in the old dame's actions, and her manner and language were so different from a provincial farm woman, that Lieutenant Thornton, who had not ceased pondering over the words she had said, of having once served an English lady whose second husband was a Frenchman, hazarded a remark looking the dame in the face.

"I once," he commenced, "performed a service for an English lady, whose second husband was a Frenchman. She was then called the Duchess of Coulancourt."

"*Eh! Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed Dame Moret, nearly dropping a bottle of wine she was taking from a cupboard, "what is that you say? Is

it possible then you are the brave English lad who saved the Duchess's daughter at Toulon?"

"I am," said our hero, greatly astonished.

"*Mon Dieu!* how rejoiced I am," and putting her arm round his neck, her eyes filled with tears, she kissed his cheek with the affection of a mother.

"My eyes! Ah! Blow me if this ain't a go," exclaimed Bill, who not understanding a word, and beholding his officer kissed by an old woman, was confounded.

"Talk of kissing," he muttered to himself, eyeing the mess on the dish, "keel haul me, if I wouldn't rather kiss that young one outside for a week. Ax your pardon, ma'am," said the seaman starting back, seeing the Dame turn round to him, "if your going to buss me, if you please let me have a pull at the mess there first."

"Hallo! Dame Moret," shouted a coarse loud voice from the kitchen, "where the *diable* have you stowed yourself. Show your nose out here, I want you."

Dame Moret started, looked frightened, but immediately put her hand on the door, saying:

"I'm coming, Pierre Gaudet; I'm coming," and then whispered to our hero, who stood confounded, for Gaudet was the name of the captain of the privateer 'Vengeance;' "Do not speak out loud, I will lock the door; remain quiet. That is a fierce man outside, though he is my son-in-law," and then the Dame passed out, locking the door after her and putting the key in her pocket.

CHAPTER VI.

"WHAT in the world brings you here this morning?" exclaimed Dame Moret.

Our hero could hear every word spoken, and such an effect had the name of Gaudet upon him, that hungry as he was he paused to listen. Not so Bill; neither understanding nor caring what was saying outside, but thinking solely of the stew before him, he looked imploringly at his officer, and pointed to the smoking viands rubbing his lips with the back of his bony hands. Our hero made him a sign to help himself. Four-and-twenty hours fast destroys polite-

ness, so putting a fair portion on his plate, Bill retired to a corner and made himself happy.

Our hero was hungry, but he was also anxious and curious. When Dame Moret said, 'What in the world brought you here this morning, Pierre Gaudet, I thought you were at sea in the 'Vengeance,'' he listened eagerly.

"Curse the salt water, and the 'Vengeance' too," returned the man, "I'm ruined; two cursed Englishmen contrived to get off yesterday with the 'Vengeance,' and somehow or other she caught fire at sea, and they ran her ashore, on the coast here—I want help."

"But I don't understand you," said Dame Moret, "how could two Englishmen run away with the lugger?"

"Give me a platter of that mess, and a bottle of your best wine, and I will tell you all about it," said Pierre Gaudet.

William Thornton turned round and sat down, and commenced satisfying his appetite, listening attentively, nevertheless, to what Pierre Gaudet said.

"There are more men in the kitchen," whispered our hero, "for I can hear the murmur of their voices; though the captain of the privateer's is by far the loudest."

Having recounted the history of the taking of the "Vengeance," the captain then told of their re-taking it; and how he and the mate of the Bonne Citoyenne, seized and fastened down in the cabin of the privateer, one of the officers and a seaman.

"And why, Pierre Gaudet," said Dame Moret, evidently in a surprised tone, "did you treat a brave officer, though an enemy, in that cruel way?"

"Ah! *sacre!* how tender-hearted you are, Dame," savagely laughed the privateer's man; "why you must know it was the cursed young devil that shot my brother-in-law through the head, and thus won the schooner, one of the fastest and best boats in the line; and when Jacques Boussain would have knocked the fiery young diable on the head, that vile seaman we secured at the same time, drove his cutlass into

him, and left him for dead. I swore when I heard this, for we in the 'Vengeance' escaped in the fog, that if ever it was in my power, I'd take a bloody revenge on those two men, and, *sacre tonnerre de Dieu*, when I had them I gloried in the revenge I intended to take. However, I'll find them yet; if they escaped out of the 'Vengeance,' and they must have done so, for else how could she have run ashore where she did, and the wind a side one?—But where is your son, Dame? I want him and his crew to go round with the next tide to where the vessel is; the wind is off shore now—something may be saved out of her, or her hull got off."

"He went down in the lugger with the ebb tide," said Dame Moret; "for we heard at daylight of a craft on fire being ashore at Caux point; but they did not get out to sea, for they were late on the ebb, and grounded. You will find them a mile or two down the creek, waiting for the flood tide."

"Sacre! that's lucky! then we will be off and

join them. Come, my lads, finish your grub, and let us join Moret and his crew; we may get her off and into the creek; the tide's rising, and the water's smooth."

There was then a murmuring of several voices, the laugh of some female, and the party left the house.

Lieutenant Thornton remained immersed in thought; so strange did it appear to him that any one connected with the Duchess of Coulancourt should be living on that part of the French coast, and that he should so strangely stumble upon the spot; he felt that he was in a dangerous situation, and he wondered that Pierre Gaudet did not hear about them from the girl who had seen them enter, and the one that was cooking, with whom Bill Saunders had been so over polite, or the lad who had directed them to the house. Altogether it was a strange adventure.

Bill, who, by this time had satisfied his appetite, looked at his officer, but was afraid to open his lips. However, in a few minutes the door

was unlocked, and Dame Moret entered the room, closing the door.

"Ah! *mon pauvre garçon*," said the Dame, "what an escape you have had from that sea brute! You must not stay here a moment; but I will save you from him; why he did not kill you when you were in his power, I can't think."

"But, my good Dame, I am longing to ask you a thousand questions. Did you hear what became of the Duchess and Jean Plessis, after she was carried off at Toulon?"

"Oh, yes, my dear sir, and saw her too, not three months ago;—but there is no time now for explanations; I must seek a place of safety—for my son-in-law will surely try to track you;—where I send you I shall be able to communicate with, and see you, and in a few days I may be enabled to get you to sea."

"I am sure," replied our hero, "I know not how to express my gratitude. I will go anywhere you please for a day or two. I cannot promise to bear confinement longer; besides, I am per-

haps placing you in peril; these are sad times in this country."

"Oh, thank God," said Dame Moret, "the worst is passed; the Reign of Terror has ended; but we must not lose time, some odd circumstance might bring Pierre Gaudet back. Do you go out through that door," continued the Dame, "and you will thus get out at the back into the orchard; I will send my daughter round to meet you; follow her, and she will take you to a place where you will both be safe; but pray impress upon your follower the necessity of caution and quietness."

So saying, Dame Moret passed out through the door, and Lieutenant Thornton, turning to Bill, explained to him their situation, and the necessity of discretion.

"Bless your honour, if we had sailed out and knocked that piratical beggar, the captain of the 'Vengeance' on the head, we should be all right. I wish I had my hand on his throttle."

"There were several men with him, Bill," said Lieutenant Thornton; "but we must do

nothing rashly; so keep quiet now and follow me."

Passing through another door facing the one they had entered the room by, our hero perceived they were in a large species of hall, with a wide wooden staircase, leading up into a heavy, clumsy gallery. Seeing a door open at the further end, he walked on, and, passing out, perceived a young woman, the same who was milking the cows when they first arrived, coming across a wide, paved court, with a gate at the end leading into a large orchard, very thickly planted.

The girl, when she came up, looked our hero in the face, and said:—

"Do you, Monsieur, follow me at a short distance, and if we pass any one, do not speak or notice them."

She then turned round and walked on rapidly, opening the gate into the orchard.

Lieutenant Thornton and his companion followed, and crossing the orchard, the girl passed out through a wicker gate, in an immensely thick,

lofty hedge. There was a narrow road outside, and along this their guide proceeded, at a quick pace, till she came to a stile, where she quitted the road, and crossed two fields, and then our hero perceived right before them, surrounded by woods, a chateau, or country mansion, of considerable dimensions, with its quaint, high, tiled roof, innumerable chimneys and gables, and a fine lawn, bordered with lofty trees before its front. The girl led the way towards the back; a high stone wall shut in the out offices and large gardens, in which was a strong door, which she unlocked, and made a motion with her hand for them to come up, which they did, and entered through the door into a courtyard of considerable extent, and scrupulously neat.

"We have been very fortunate," said the young woman. "I do not think any one observed us; it is a fête day at Havre, and nearly all our lads and lasses are gone there."

"What chateau is this?" asked our hero, looking up at the building which seemed to have been recently repaired and painted.

"This chateau!" said the girl, surprised. "Why, I thought mother told you; this is Coulancourt."

"Coulancourt!" returned our hero, with a start.

"Yes," said Annette Moret, the dame's eldest unmarried daughter. "This is where the good Duke was born; he was then only the Count De Coulancourt, his elder brother the Duke held the great estates near Lyons, at whose death the late Duke came to the title, and went to live near Lyons, and there married an English lady. But mon Dieu! how I am talking, and keeping you, Monsieur, standing here in the yard!"

Lieutenant Thornton was so much surprised that he stood immersed in thought, till roused by Annette requesting him to walk in, having unlocked a door from a bunch of keys in her little basket.

Our hero looked around astonished, for all within the mansion was neat, and carefully preserved; they passed into the kitchen, where every

utensil was bright and tidy, as if a dozen fairy hands had presided over them.

"Really, Mademoiselle Annette," said our hero, "one would imagine some fairies had the care of everything here, all is so neat and carefully arranged."

Annette laughed, saying:

"Oh, Monsieur, the fairies are my sister and myself, and our farm girls. Madame Coulancourt spares no expense, and orders that every article should be kept as neat as if she lived here herself. Her intendant and his daughter come here twice a year to receive rents, and see that Madame's tenants want for nothing. The people here would die for Madame if she required it. The intendant is a good man, and his daughter is a pretty nice girl; they stay here a month, perhaps more, at a time. But come up stairs, Monsieur; my mother desired me to put you in Monsieur L'Intendant's room, and your man can have his servant's chamber."

Full of thought Lieutenant Thornton followed

Annette, who was a very tidy and well-mannered girl, though not so pretty as her younger sister whom our hero had met on the road.

"I did not bring the keys of the grand saloon Monsieur, but here is Monsieur L'Intendant's room," and throwing open a door, she entered, and unbolted and unbarred the shutters. This room was small but remarkably neat; there was a book-case full of books, a fowling piece, and a brace of pistols over the mantel-piece, and a telescope on a stand, and sundry useful articles on the tables.

"That door," said Annette, pointing to one, "leads to a bedroom, which you can occupy; all is aired and prepared, for we expect Monsieur and his daughter in a week."

"Does no one inhabit the chateau? Are you not afraid of its being plundered?"

"Oh dear, no, Monsieur; two men sleep every night in the out buildings, and one walks about all night with a big dog. Indeed, for the last six months this precaution has been unnecessary for there are no strangers about now; things have

dropped into their old way, thank God! They were terrible times three years ago."

"If the men who sleep here," said our hero, "find out, which they must, that we are here, it may come to the ears of Captain Gaudet, and that would bring your good mother into trouble."

"No fear of that, Monsieur. When they are told that Madame has ordered the persons who are here not to be disturbed or spoken of, it's enough. Not a word will be said. Besides, Captain Gaudet is detested here; my eldest sister made an unfortunate match when she married him. He is from St. Valery, and was Captain of a small brigantine, but when the war broke out he joined with his brother-in-law, also of St. Valery, to fit out a Privateer, and being fortunate they after a time purchased the 'Vengeance,' and the 'Bonne-Citoyenne,' and cruized in company. Since the war he has grown so ferocious and cruel that the men about these parts, who shipped with him at first, have left him, and my brother, who owns a coasting and fishing lugger, will have nothing to do with him.

My sister, who lives near Havre, and has two children, contrives somehow to manage him when not excited by drink, but when drunk he is terrible. My youngest sister you met this morning has gone to Havre to see her sister, and take her a present of fowls' eggs and butter. Now, Monsieur, I must go; in the evening I will return with food and all things you may require; till then keep the door locked. You can walk in the great walled garden, for no one can see into it, and it is in very nice order."

The young man expressed his gratitude and thanks to Annette Moret for the kindness he received; but Bill, whom they found in the kitchen very quietly lighting a fire from materials he had found in a cellar, said:

"I hope, sir, you will be so good as to ax for a small bit of backee and a pipe."

"Backee!" interrupted Annette, with a smile. "I understand sailors can't live without tobacco," and taking a key from her basket she unlocked a cupboard, in which Bill, with an exclamation of joy, beheld a row of pipes; and taking down a jar,

Annette shewed him it was full of the weed he so dearly loved; this so transported him, that he was within an ace of rewarding Annette with an embrace, had not our hero's look, and the girl's serious manner stopped him.

When Annette had retired, Bill was allowed to smoke a pipe in the court-yard, for, strange to say, Lieutenant Thornton never at any period of his life indulged in tobacco in any shape.

Leaving Bill, therefore, to his pipe and his meditations he returned to the Intendant's sitting room, and throwing himself into a comfortable arm-chair, fell into a profound sleep from fatigue, not having rested the two previous nights.

CHAPTER VII.

Our young hero must have slept soundly, for he did not awake when, in the dusk of the evening, Dame Moret and her daughter entered the room, quietly laid a cloth, put some cold fowl and ham upon the table, and finally lighted a lamp, which aroused him. He started up in great surprise, and seeing Dame Moret, said:

"I was so overpowered with sleep that I could really not resist indulging; I fear I am putting you to a great deal of trouble."

"Oh no, Monsieur, that you are not. I know how Madame would have me act if she knew

you were here; and now I know who you are, I am as anxious to serve you as Madame herself. But I pray you take some supper; I have given your man his in the kitchen; he seems a very kind simple-hearted creature, anxious to do anything, and after you have supped we will have half-an-hour's conversation."

"It will afford me much pleasure, my good Dame," said our hero, "for I long to ask a great many questions."

"Very well; now pray take your supper, and I will come up by and bye, when I have put some things to rights for your man. It's a pity he does not understand our language."

"Oh, he will pick it up very soon, Dame Moret," said Lieutenant Thornton, with a smile, "for he is inclined to go to the fountain head for instruction."

The good dame laughed, and hoping he would make a good meal, retired.

Our hero did eat heartily, for he was but one-and-twenty, and of a high and fearless disposition, and his critical situation did not trouble

him; he scarcely bestowed a thought upon it. The loss of his time from his profession was the only thing that vexed him, and he resolved in a day or two to make an attempt to get off in a boat, and take his chance of reaching England, or some vessel of war."

When Dame Moret thought he had finished his supper, she and her daughter Annette re-entered the room. The latter removed the things, and the Dame sat down, first putting a bottle of excellent Burgundy before our hero.

"You will find that very good wine, sir, for Monsieur l'Intendant loves a bottle of good Burgundy, and madame sent a good store here from Paris."

"I am astonished at this place being called Coulancourt," said our hero, "and at hearing that madame is living in Paris, and restored to her estates, for I feared she was in the power of her enemies."

"I am so anxious to ask after her daughter, Mademoiselle Mabel," said Dame Moret, "she was but a child, I may say, when she was here

—six years old, I think—but she was as lovely, engaging a little girl as ever eyes beheld; and her little brother, Julian—alas! what a fate was his, so young, and such a noble boy!"

"Well, dame, I will tell you all about Mabel, and you shall tell me about Madame Coulancourt. How I should like to see her, and tell her how tenderly her daughter loves and remembers her."

Lieutenant Thornton then told the attentive dame all his adventures, from the period Mabel was placed under his care till their arrival in England, and the singular abduction of the papers and jewels from the casket entrusted to him; and how Mabel was placed in a highly-respectable school, and under the care of a most kind French lady, the widow of Admiral Volney; finishing with an account of his mishap on board the "Vengeance," and the cruel conduct of Captain Gaudet.

"Ah!" said the old dame, with a sigh, "he's a sad, sad man—as fierce and cruel as a wild beast when he drinks, and, latterly he drinks

very hard. He was not always so; before he became a privateer's man he was very well; but I believe, sir, privateering makes a man very reckless and careless about shedding blood—they become very hardened."

"It is often the case, dame; they know they seldom get quarter from their opponents, and that renders them reckless and savage. Then the love of plunder increases, they become little better than pirates."

"You mentioned," he continued a moment after, "that Madame Coulancourt was residing in Paris, and that her estates were restored to her. How did she escape from her enemies?"

"By their being guillotined, Monsieur; but I will tell you all the particulars,—

"I was, you must know, nurse to the Count de Coulancourt, who was born in this chateau. He became duke on his elder brother's death, and, alas! was beheaded in his forty-eighth year; and I am now seventy-four years of age myself. When Monsieur de Coulancourt became duke, he bestowed upon me and my hus-

band the farm and land we now hold; but we have added to it since. Fourteen years ago I lost my poor man, but the bon Dieu was good to me; I had kind and good children, and our farm prospered. When the Duke married our kind and beautiful mistress, at Lyons, he took her to Paris, with her two handsome children, and, after a time, he came here. At this period the revolution had not yet shown itself formidable; nobody looked for the dethronement of their king, much less his cruel murder. Still the land was troubled, and people were unsettled and, at times, riotous, and fiercely denouncing the nobility and clergy.

"The Duke and Duchess remained here in tranquillity, greatly beloved by all their dependents; and here was born an heir to the Duke—as fine a baby as you ever beheld. Alas! it lived but three months, and was unfortunately, to the deep grief of its parents, carried off by the small-pox, then raging fearfully in this district. A summons from our ill-fated King called the Duke to his council.

"We never saw our beloved master again. The whole country became convulsed, father rose against son and son against father. Thank God! we all survived the convulsion here, except our poor priest and one or two of the small gentry. The former was killed in the streets of Havre—but you know enough of the horrors that took place. Years rolled by, and the estate of the Coulancourts fell to the nation, for they said the Duke was a malignant and an aristocrat, and it went into neglect, for no one came near it. In these remote parts, we could not hear what had become of the Duchess and her children. People were afraid to speak during the Reign of Terror. At length that ended, and we thanked God that we were spared. Time went on, and at last, to our intense joy, we had a message from Paris sent down to us to say that the Duchess—or rather, Madame, for titles were all extinguished in France—had been tried in Paris, and was declared innocent of every crime against the state; the rulers restored to her Coulancourt and some other property, but the

great bulk of the Duke's estates the nation still retained. This was a relief to us all. Workmen were employed to restore the chateau, and madame expressed a wish that I would travel up to Paris to see her, and I did. Oh, mon Dieu! Monsieur, how we wept when we saw each other. Ah! she was still beautiful, though thin and care-worn. She was ignorant whether her child had reached England, and she dared not communicate with that country. She told me how she confided her daughter to a young and gallant lad, and that he had safely got her on board ship, for that good Monsieur Jean Plessis—no better man living—watched over her and madame with unceasing care. She told me that the officer's name was Thornton, and that in the casket there were jewels of value, and nearly twenty thousand francs in gold, besides certificates of Mabel's birth, her brother's also, and of her own marriage with her first husband.

"I staid nearly a month in Paris with my mistress; she could scarcely bear to part with

me, but said, when she could get leave, she would come and live in Coulancourt. She ordered her intendant, Monsieur Jean Plessis"—

"Jean Plessis," enquired our hero; "was he a married man?"

"Yes, Monsieur, and a very nice, pretty, good lady his wife is; and his daughter, she is nearly eighteen, is a remarkably pretty, clever demoiselle—plays the great piano in the saloon so nicely. She and her mother remain six months of the year here, and we keep up the place just as if madame herself was expected."

"Do you think a letter could be got safely to Madame Coulancourt?" asked our hero, anxiously.

"Oh dear yes, Monsieur, quite easily. My son writes to Monsieur Jean Plessis constantly; he could enclose one for madame."

"Then I will write this night. It will so ease her mind to hear all about Mabel; though it will grieve her to hear of the loss of the contents of the casket."

"Oh! the joy of knowing her beloved child is safe and well," said the dame, "will render her grief for the loss of the casket trifling,"

"Do not you think, dame, that we might get a boat in this navigable creek, and be able to put to sea?"

"Not for a little while, Monsieur; quite impossible. I have not yet told you about the 'Vengeance.' Captain Gaudet, with the help of my son's lugger and another craft from Havre, have floated the hull of the 'Vengeance,' and towed her inside of the creek and stranded her. One of my son's crew came back to tell us the news; and, besides, they have sent out two coast-guard boats to watch the coast. They say there is a corvette or a frigate off and on, as if with the intention of landing, or looking out for some of the crew of the ship that thought to cut out the 'Vengeance,' so you had better stay quiet for a few days. It would be terrible to arouse suspicion. My son-in-law, Captain Gaudet, you may be sure, will watch the creek."

Lieutenant Thornton thought for a moment, and then said:

"Well, dame Moret, I should be sorry to do anything rash, and perhaps bring trouble on those who have so kindly assisted me. I will write to Madame Coulancourt to-night. How long do you suppose it would take to have an answer from Madame Coulancourt?"

"Not more than five or six days, Monsieur. I will send the letters from Havre by the post."

"Well, then I will wait till I hear from Madame before I attempt my escape, and when I do make an effort for freedom I shall not, I trust, involve any one in my mishap should I fail."

"Ah! *mon dieu!* you must be guided," said Dame Moret, "you are young and sanguine; but to try and get out of the country now will be a very hazardous attempt."

"I should like," said our hero, "to obtain a change of garments for several reasons."

"They may easily be procured," said Dame Moret. "My son will get you a plain country

gentleman's sporting costume. I will give out that a young friend of Monsieur l'Intendant's is coming here for a few weeks' fishing in our trout streams; as you speak the language so well you may amuse yourself in that way without creating any suspicion, but your man must change his dress also, and he can then pass for your servant."

Lieutenant Thornton was pleased with this arrangement; as he would thus avoid confinement, a thing he detested, and he was fond of trout fishing.

"I have quite funds enough, Dame," said our hero, taking out from his belt some gold pieces, to the amount of £10 British. "These will purchase most of the articles I require."

"You had better keep them, Monsieur," said the Dame, "for a time of need. We will get you whatever you require, Madame would be very angry indeed if we did not."

In vain our hero insisted, the Dame was obstinate, so he allowed her to have her own way, resolving to have his another time.

After some further conversation Dame Moret rose to retire, telling the gentleman he would find his room ready, and that one of her daughters would be in attendance morning and evening. Our hero insisted that she should not take that trouble, as Bill was an excellent cook, as most seamen are, and that a few simple necessaries was all that they required and it would attract less observation.

Dame Moret smiled.

"Oh! as to that, Monsieur, there is no fear, for every day some of my family come here to dust the furniture and keep things neat; besides, they all know the Intendant is expected in a few days, and may bring visitors with him."

After Dame Moret had retired, our hero sat down, taking paper, pens, and ink from an open desk the old Dame shewed him, and spent an hour or two writing to Madame Coulancourt the full particulars of everything that had occurred to Mabel and himself since their parting from her. He also mentioned the discovery he had made,

through Madame Volney's communication, with respect to her brother, and the finding of the portrait, asking if she thought it were possible to trace the papers and effects lost by Madame Volney when forced to fly from Paris.

This detail committed to paper, he resolved to await the return of an answer to his letter before he made any attempt at an escape. He had a great desire to hear what became of his commander, Sir Sidney Smith, whether he remained at Havre, or was sent further into the interior.

The next day Rose, the youngest daughter of Dame Moret, the damsel he had first spoken to, and who had so kindly and fortunately directed him to her mother's, came to the chateau to take his letter, and to provide for their wants for the day. She brought in her basket coffee, eggs, and poultry. Rose was a very pretty modest girl of seventeen, and looked quite pleased at being of service to our hero, who not being in love, could see that Rose had a pair of very bright and sparkling eyes, and as neat a foot and ankle as any maiden in the province.

"I have brought you the key of the saloon, Monsieur," said Rose; "you may like to look at the pictures; and there is a piano and harp there. They belonged to Madame Coulancourt, she played so beautifully, but I was only a child in those days. But Mademoiselle Plessis plays the piano; they will be here in a few days, and then it will not be so lonely for you."

"I shall not be lonely," replied our hero, helping Rose to unlock the door of the grand saloon, "if you will pay me a visit daily. Your pretty face will drive away all my gloomy thoughts."

Rose blushed, but laughing said:

"You will have Mademoiselle Julia to chat with. She is so pretty and lively, that you cannot be dull where she is."

"Did you hear anything at Havre yesterday, Rose," questioned our hero, as they opened the shutters to admit the light, which before only entered from loopholes left in the shutters, "anything about the English prisoners taken on board the 'Vengeance' I mean ?"

"Yes, Monsieur; my sister told me they had

been marched to Rouen, and that the Commander and the young officer with him were to be sent Paris."

"To Paris!" repeated Lieutenant Thornton, in a tone of regret, "I am sorry for that. I fear they will endure a long captivity."

Our hero now looked round the noble saloon, full sixty feet in length, and hung round with pictures in antique frames.

"That is, I suppose, the late Duke de Coulancourt?" he enquired, looking at a half length portrait suspended over the lofty white marble chimney piece.

"Yes, Monsieur, that is his picture; he was a young man when that was taken, in the Royal Guards of Louis the XVI. There, on the wall opposite, is his grandfather, who commanded the famous Musketeers. I will go now, Monsieur, because your letter must be enclosed, and sent from Havre before night."

"I am giving you and all your family a great deal of trouble, and fear they and you may incur some risk from protecting me and my comrade."

"Not at all, Monsieur; especially as Captain Gaudet has got plenty of employment. He is going to repair the 'Vengeance,' and he thinks of nothing else. He fancies also that you and your man were either drowned or burned in the vessel, for my brother, who was with my mother this morning, says he does not seem to trouble about anything but the repairs of the craft."

After the departure of Rose, Lieutenant Thornton spent some time in examining the pictures and the saloon itself, which was finished in the costly but heavy style of the preceding century. The late Duke's portrait was that of a remarkably handsome man of some five-and-twenty years, but there was an expression of great melancholy over the features, which our hero judged was habitual to them and not the fault of the artist, for the portrait was beautifully and artistically painted. He took a survey of every article in the saloon, which, however, created a painful sensation, as they recalled those that were gone, and the melancholy fate of those whom

neither rank, wealth, virtue, nor position, could save from the doom of the criminal.

Several days passed over, somewhat tedious, it is true, to our hero, though he chatted for an hour or two daily with pretty Rose Moret, who did all she could to please her handsome and rather dangerous guest. She shewed him the gardens, gathered him the choicest flowers for his chamber, and told him all the news; William Thornton was grateful, kind, and attentive to his engaging companion, and his heart and principles were too good and upright to take any undue advantage of Rose's innocence and naïveté.

Bill Saunders smoked, and cooked, and feasted, and made love to Rose's sister when she came. And she appeared to enjoy Bill's method of learning French, for many a cheerful laugh did our hero hear from below, and an incessant clatter of tongues; how they understood one another he could not say, but they seemed remarkably pleasant together.

At length, on the tenth day, Dame Moret made her appearance, with a letter and a huge bundle of garments.

"A letter from Madame at last, Monsieur. I have had one also, and here is a bundle of clothes made as if for my son, who is a tall man like yourself. In these garments you may walk about the country and fish to amuse yourself, for Madame says you must not on any account think of escaping till you see Monsieur Plessis, who will bring a passport all ready for your use to travel into Flanders. But what an old gossip I am, you are dying to read your letter, which will of course tell you a great deal more, and better than I can."

"You are as kind to me as if I were one of your own family, and, believe me, I shall never forget in after years, if I am spared, Dame Moret and her kind daughters."

"You are a brave handsome garçon, and God will restore you to your own country. And perhaps some of these days you may marry Mademoiselle Mabel, and if there is peace soon I

may live to see you both, and my dear mistress in this old Chateau."

The young man felt his cheeks flush, for the Dame's words struck a chord in his heart. Might he ever feel sufficient love for Mabel Arden to make her his wife, provided her feelings for him were reciprocal? was a question he had often asked himself. He, however, replied:—

"She will not probably remember me when we meet again. She was very little more than thirteen when last I saw her; indeed, I was not more than seventeen myself. I doubt if we should recognise each other."

"I do not think so," said the dame, thoughtfully; "she may have changed considerably, for a young girl springing into womanhood does change much; but you, I should say, have altered but little in features; you have gained height and strength, it may be, but she would know you, I feel satisfied, for Mademoiselle Mabel was no common child, even when only six years old. The memory of early years will

cling to her as the ivy to the oak. But, excuse me, Monsieur, I will leave you to read your letter."

Lieutenant Thornton was very thoughtful as he broke the seal of Madame Coulancourt's letter. We shall merely touch upon certain points that deeply interested and strongly affected himself. The part that he felt most keenly was Madame Coulancourt's explanation, having reference to the death of her beloved brother, Sir Oscar De Bracy, whom she felt quite satisfied was his father. For a time he could scarcely proceed. This intelligence, though he had not the happiness of remembering his parents, made him feel acutely this cruel disappointment, for he had hoped that he would have lived to reach England, and acknowledge him as his son. It was some balm to his grieved heart to learn that Sir Oscar had received Mr. Stanmore's letters, and fully acknowledged him and his niece Mabel, in his will, and before witnesses. Madame Coulancourt begged him not to grieve over the loss of the papers in the casket, as she was fully confi-

dent of being able, through the agency of Monsieur Jean Plessis, to obtain duplicates of them, which would do equally as well. She also stated that she had every reason to hope that her son, Julian, had not perished at the time of his separation from her at Lyons; but was, with many others, forced to serve the Republic, in either the army or the navy; and that she was exerting herself to trace him. She also entreated him not to attempt an escape from the country till he had seen Jean Plessis, who, with his wife and daughter, and a young friend, were, in a week or so, to leave Paris for Coulancourt. There was a slight rumour of peace with Great Britain, which she ardently prayed for, as she longed to return to her native land. The intelligence she was able to give him was told her by a Madame de Fenuille, a great friend of Madame Volney's, who had lately returned to France from England, via Hamburgh. She also sincerely congratulated him upon the singular discovery of his birth, and consequent connection with her by ties of blood and this un-

expected discovery accounted for the affection she had so unaccountably felt for him from the very first and only interview they ever had. She was at the time struck with his features, which seemed to recall the long past, though she could not, so troubled as she then was, tax her memory; but now she felt satisfied it was his resemblance to a beloved brother.

Our hero read the kind and affectionate letter of his aunt with deep emotion; it contained much besides, bearing proof the writer was depressed at the death of a brother she had fondly hoped to have seen once more.

That night the young sailor slept but little. He felt deeply grieved at his father's death; for like Madame Coulancourt, he had looked forward to Sir Oscar's return to Europe, and that any mystery yet attached to his birth would be cleared up; he was of course not acquainted with the ample details in Sir Oscar's will and papers, all of which Mr. Stanmore possessed, and which awaited his return to England.

Besides having his thoughts bent upon the

loss he had thus incurred, with a very serious feeling, they also rested upon Mabel Arden. Hitherto he had only remembered her as an endearing child—as a sister. She was now, he was assured, a fair and beautiful girl; would she be so changed by the lapse of five years, as to baffle his memory of her features? Then it occurred to him, that from untoward circumstances, years might elapse before his foot would again rest on England's soil.

CHAPTER VIII.

"BILL," said Lieutenant Thornton, one morning after breakfast, as, habited in a very unpretending shooting dress of dark green cloth, which fitted him well, "Bill, did you ever go out trout fishing?"

"Trout fishing, sir," repeated Bill, who was also equipped in a somewhat similar dress, and whose whiskers and moustachios had grown into formidable dimensions; "no, sir, I can't say as how I ever seed a trout. I've speared and harpooned many a shark; if he's anything like one

of them ere beggars, I'm blowed, your honour, but we'll have some fun with him."

"Well, I confess, Bill, a trout is not exactly a shark; but there's some sport in catching him, and he makes a capital fry; so strap that basket on you," taking down as he spoke a trout rod, several of which were suspended on hooks, in a chamber devoted to articles for the chase, and various other amusements that men call sport. "At all events, Bill," continued our hero, preparing to sally forth, "if we catch no fish, we shall have air and exercise, and that's something. If we meet any one, do not speak a word; and, above all things, leave off kissing the girls, it's a bad habit."

Bill rubbed his left ear with a very comical expression of countenance, and turned a very doubtful look at his master.

"Your honour can parley vous, with the women," said Bill, "but, Lord, sir, I'm high and dry; brought up on a sandbank; but, howsomever, I will do my best, and steer clear; hope your honour will give 'em a wide berth also,

seeing that they are a kind of craft that loves hugging; which is somewhat dangerous, when the wind's right on the shore."

"I will set you a good example, Bill, depend upon it, for if we expect to get out of this country, we must make sail without a craft in tow."

Bill smiled, and commenced practising silence, though his thoughts were busy.

Leaving the chateau by the back entrance, and locking the door after them, they proceeded to find their way to the trout stream they could see in the distance from the upper windows of the chateau, winding through the fields and vineyards about half a mile from the house. It was very picturesque scenery surrounding the Chateau De Coulancourt; a bend of the river Seine, of a noble breadth, came within less than a mile of the mansion, and a splendid trout stream emptied itself into its broader waters. The country was also well timbered, and here and there were scattered several well kept farms, considering the neglected way in which farming

in general was attended to in France; the culture of the vine being a principal feature in all farms in that vicinity. The vine was as yet scarcely showing symptoms of vegetation; not that French vineyards in general are an object of either interest or beauty, the grape only growing to the height of four feet, and trained to a single stick.

The Englishmen confined their rambles the first day merely to the trout stream, which was a remarkably picturesque one, and about five miles from the chateau, sometimes tumbling in rapid runs, at other times gliding along under steep banks overgrown with flowering plants, and wild cactus. Our hero was not a practised trout deceiver, but he could throw a fly sufficiently well to coax a middling sized fish to make a fool of himself, to Bill's surprise, who had watched his master's proceedings with considerable amazement, having never seen a trout fly in his life, and had an idea in his head that his master must be a little cracked on the subject of catching fish, if he expected to entrap

one with such a rum concern as an artificial fly seemed to him. To his astonishment, however, the Lieutenant sung out:

"Now, Bill, I have him; make haste with the landing net, he's over three pound weight."

"My eyes, where is he, sir?" exclaimed Bill, seeing the rod bent double, and no signs of a fish.

"I am playing him a bit, Bill; he's rather lively yet."

"Lord love your honour! Heave him out, I'll take the liveliness out of him."

As he uttered the words, there was the report of a pistol and the prolonged scream of a female voice which appeared to come out from a thicket near them, and through which they had observed ran a carriage road.

Dropping his rod, regardless of the trout, who was, no doubt, exceedingly obliged, our hero ran towards the wood, followed by Bill with the landing net in his hand, wondering what sort of fish his master was now going to catch.

Leaping a stile, that delayed Bill a minute

to get over, Lieutenant Thornton reached the main road after a run of three minutes, and soon beheld the cause of the pistol shot and the shriek of the female. In the road stood a travelling Berlin, with one horse still attached, the other lying dead entangled in its harness. Two men in very peculiar costumes were struggling to hold a tall, strong man, another clutched a young female by the arm, preventing her flight, whilst two others were deliberately rifling the carriage.

Such a proceeding in broad-day light, and in, as he thought, a peaceable country, naturally astounded our hero, who, nevertheless, drew his couteau de chasse, without which no gentleman stirred abroad in those days, and made a spring at the powerful looking ruffian dragging back the young female. The man with a curse drew a pistol, and fired full in William Thornton's face; as he did so a scream of agony escaped the young girl's lips, but the ball only knocked off the Lieutenant's hat, and the next instant his knife passed through the villain with such

force that the hilt striking against his chest drove him to the ground, quite dead; he was dragging the fainting female down with him, but our hero caught her round the waist, and held her up.

Short as was his glance of her pale face, he saw that she was young and singularly beautiful; he had no time to see more, for the second man with a fearful execration, rushed upon the Lieutenant with a drawn knife of formidable dimensions, but Bill Saunders, who had by this time arrived on the scene of action, with only his landing net for a weapon, just as the ruffian was about to strike at his Commander with his knife, popped the net over his head, giving it such a powerful pull back that he half-strangled the man by tightning the iron rim against his throat, bringing him to the ground.

"Blow me," chuckled Bill, "if here ain't a fish of another sort! How are you, my hearty, after that?" administering as he spoke a kick that turned the man over on his face.

In the mean time the stranger struggling with

the two other ruffians, who were startled by the sudden onset of the Englishman and his companion, got free, and instantly pulling a pistol from his breast, shot the nearest to him; whilst our hero, having laid the female, who had fainted, on the bank, rushed up to assist the stranger, another female in the carriage shrieking out that the robbers would murder her father.

Two of the men lying dead, one disabled, and held in Bill's grasp like a vice, so terrified the other two that they took to their heels, plunging into the wood, and getting lost in its intricacies.

The stranger ran at once to the bank, where the female our hero had rescued lay prostrate, and raising her tenderly in his arms, called out:

"Julia, Julia, make haste, and come here."

Our hero was turning to assist, when a young girl leaped from the voiture, and ran eagerly towards the stranger, casting a look at Lieutenant Thornton as she passed, of great curiosity, She was very pale and very frightened, but our hero could perceive she was a remarkably pretty

girl, but very different in manners and appearance from her companion.

"This must be the Intendant, Jean Plessis," thought our hero, "though I do not remember him." Turning to Bill, who was still grasping his captive, and giving him an angry shake now and then, he said: "Let him go, Bill, as if accidentally. It will not do in our situation to have to confront the authorities against this fellow. The other two are dead. Just slacken your hold, and come with me; I see the rascally postillion coming along the road with several persons following. I dare say he ran away."

The stranger having restored the young lady to consciousness, for she had fainted, now came towards our hero, and, holding out his hand, said in an agitated voice:

"I feel certain we owe our preservation to Monsieur Thornton, you do not, I fear, remember me—I am Jean Plessis."

Our hero shook the hand held out to him warmly, saying:

"I guessed as much, Monsieur Plessis, and

now that I hear the tone of your voice my recollection returns; but how came you to recognise me?"

"Oh, Monsieur, only because I knew you were at the chateau, and hearing you speak satisfied me that you were Lieutenant Thornton. It was most providential that you were on the spot, otherwise these ruffians would have grossly illused my daughter and Mademoiselle De Tourville, and plundered us of everything. Ah, you were right," he added, in a low voice, looking round; "I see your man has let the ruffian he held steal away. No doubt you ordered him to do so."

"I did," returned our hero; "I thought he would be a useless incumbrance to us."

"You are quite right; but one word more for the present, for I see several of the people of the vicinity coming across the fields. Recollect you must take the name of Tourville—Phillip De Tourville—brother to this young lady under my care. We shall have more time to talk of this when we get to the chateau; but let me intro-

duce you to Mademoiselle Tourville, she is a young lady of good family, but, unfortunately, a sufferer during the terrible reign of terror."

Both the females were standing at some little distance, leaning on each other, and conversing in a low voice. As Jean Plessis and our hero approached, they turned round, and Lieutenant Thornton could perceive that the taller of the two, a graceful and very lovely girl, trembled exceedingly and was as pale as death.

"Mademoiselle De Tourville," said Jean Plessis, "to this gallant gentleman we owe our rescue; this is the Monsieur Thornton, that for a time takes your name, and will pass as your brother; and this is my daughter, Monsieur," motioning with his hand to the other young lady, who appeared infinitely more self-possessed, and, as our hero thought, much less frightened.

"I will go and speak to those men coming up," continued Jean Plessis, "and prevent them addressing your man, and will send for another horse to take us to the chateau," so saying he left the Lieutenant with the two maidens.

Our hero, though exceedingly puzzled, and, indeed, somewhat bewildered by the whole affair, but particularly by his having to take the name of Tourville, and to pass for the brother of the beautiful girl who stood before him, advanced, and looking Mademoiselle De Tourville in the face, said:

"You are still, I fear, Mademoiselle, much frightened; I wish I had been so fortunate as to have been nearer, I might have prevented those rascals altogether from frightening and insulting you."

Mademoiselle De Tourville made an attempt to reply, but the words died away on her lips, and with difficulty she kept from giving way to tears.

Seeing the distress of her companion, Mademoiselle Plessis at once said:

"I am sure, Monsieur, we are deeply grateful for the assistance you so very opportunely rendered us. My friend was terrified perhaps more than she otherwise would have been by the man who held her firing a pistol full in your face."

"That was certainly the case," added Mademoiselle De Tourville, in a trembling voice, and her eyes resting for an instant on the Lieutenant's features. It was but for a second, yet the look of those full, dark, and wonderfully expressive eyes, created a strange and undefined feeling in our hero's breast. He bowed, and replied, he felt proud of her interest in his safety, and hoped in a very short time she would feel quite restored, and then added with a smile:

"According to Monsieur Plessis, I am to sustain the part of a brother, so that I only acted as if by intuition the character I was to perform; but who were those villains—were they mere robbers?"

"We cannot tell, Monsieur," said Mademoiselle Plessis. "We never heard of robbers in these parts; we came down the Seine from Arlet to Rouen, and then my father, having to visit one or two farms on the way, hired this berlin to take us to the chateau, and to shew the country to my friend. My mother and our

female domestics went on in the barge to Havre, and I dare say are at the chateau by this time."

Jean Plessis here joined them, saying:

"You had better, young ladies, walk on with Monsieur a little way. I will overtake you with the voiture; I shall have a horse here in a few minutes. I must have the two villains who have suffered the penalty of their crime carried to the village and buried."

Mademoiselle De Tourville shuddered, but Lieutenant Thornton said:

"Were they robbers, Monsieur Plessis?"

"Not common robbers, certainly," returned the Intendant, "for I am told there are none in these parts; but we shall hear more about them by and bye."

The two young girls then walked gently on, our hero keeping by the side of Mademoiselle Tourville.

"You selected a very pleasant mode of travelling, ladies," remarked our hero, breaking the silence; "I have heard that the windings of

the Seine, and the banks and country on each side are extremely beautiful."

"We enjoyed the sailing part of our journey very much," replied the daughter of the Intendant, "but we did not travel all the way from Paris by water; Madame Coulancourt's carriage took us to Morlins, and thence we travelled to Rouen."

"I trust you left Madame Coulancourt quite well," said the Lieutenant.

"Thank you; quite well," returned Mademoiselle Tourville, with a voice less agitated, and looking up, the extreme paleness of her countenance passing off, a slight tinge of returning colour was visible in her cheek. "We have letters and a parcel for you, Monsieur Thornton."

"You forget," said the Lieutenant, struck by the tone of her voice, and the different accent in which she spoke the French language from her friend, "You forget I must accustom myself to the name of Tourville, and that I am your brother. May I ask, have you a brother?"

"I hope so," returned the young girl, with a good deal of emotion, "but I can only say I

trust Providence has preserved him, the terrible revolution separated us, and since then we have had no certain information concerning him."

"Such has been the lot of many a brother and sister, Mademoiselle," said the Lieutenant. "Madame Coulancourt must have told you that she lost a beloved son, and was forced to separate, also, from a daughter she dearly loved."

"We heard of that event," returned Mademoiselle de Tourville, and, in a voice tremulous with emotion, and letting her eyes, in which there were tears, rest upon the ground, "and how you, Monsieur, though merely a youth, bravely protected Madame's little girl, and took her safely to England."

"What is it," said our hero, communing with his own thoughts, "that so strangely stirs up recollections of the past, and makes me feel so agitated when I hear the sound of this girl's voice, and gaze into her beautiful eyes. Mabel was but a child, and yet those large eyes of hers spoke to the heart even then."

"You seem very thoughtful, Monsieur de Tourville," said Mademoiselle Plessis, with a curious smile upon her short, pretty lip; "are you thinking of Madame de Coulancourt's beautiful daughter! for a letter was read to us from a Madame Volney, which stated that Mademoiselle Mabel, from being only a 'pale, thin, interesting child, had grown into a lovely young woman.'"

The young man started, and flushed in the cheek. "Pale, thin, interesting child!" Those were his own words! He looked at Mademoiselle Plessis, but she was quite demure, and her friend was gazing at the road. The sound of carriage-wheels caused them to turn round, and then they beheld the berlin coming towards them, to which two horses were harnessed.

"Ah! there is our voiture and our cowardly postillion," said Mademoiselle Plessis; "I do hate a coward; the handsomest man in the world would be contemptible in my eyes if he showed the white feather. But it is pardonable in our

sex," she added, with a gay laugh; "is it not, Monsieur de Tourville?"

"It becomes an attraction," said the Lieutenant, gaily; "it ensures our sex the attention which we might not otherwise be favoured with."

"You do us wrong there, Monsieur," said Mademoiselle de Tourville, in a low voice.

The carriage stopped beside them, and Monsieur Plessis jumped out.

Lieutenant Thornton assisted the two girls into the vehicle, and then, when Monsieur Plessis wished him to get in, he declined, saying he would walk, as Bill Saunders was with him, and he wished to go back for the fishing-rod he had left on the side of the stream.

Monsieur Plessis considered a moment, and then replied:

"You are right; so farewell, Monsieur, for an hour or two."

As the Lieutenant was closing the door, his eyes met those of Mademoiselle de Tourville, who observed, with no little agitation:

"Indeed, Monsieur, you incur a risk; suppose those horrid men still lurk in the wood!"

"There is no fear of that," said Jean Plessis "the peasantry are roused, and these villains, will either be taken or get out of the country as fast as they can."

CHAPTER IX.

Our hero, followed by Bill Saunders—who was extremely puzzled to understand what had recently taken place, and turning over in his own mind what might be the consequence of living in the chateau with such lots of handsome girls, who seemed to him to be increasing daily—proceeded to the place where he had thrown down his rod. Bill in vain tried to edge in a word; his master was not to be roused from his train of reflections.

"Is this love at first sight?" our hero asked of himself; "for never did I feel the same

strange and unaccountable sensation for a beautiful girl before. I have been in love a dozen times, or, at least, fancied I was; but this is a very different feeling. I used to laugh at the idea of the most beautiful face in the world causing any other sensation at first sight than that of anything else very lovely. No, it will not do, to fall in love with a French girl, in my position; and it's very clear, if I do not make my escape, I shall do so."

"My eyes, sir, where's the rod?" exclaimed Bill, having arrived at the precise spot.

Lieutenant Thornton looked about him; there was no rod to be seen, nor fishing basket; but, as they looked along the river, some three hundred yards further down, they perceived a man fishing, and towards him our hero walked, telling Bill to keep at a little distance. As he advanced, the person fishing looked up, and at once came towards him. Lieutenant Thornton could see he was a tall young man, in a dress very similar to his own, and he could also per-

ceive that he carried his missing rod in his hand, and the basket at his back.

"Humph!" muttered our hero; "free and easy, at all events." But as the young man—evidently a gentleman, and a handsome one to boot—came up, he said, with a polite bow, and a smile:

"I hope, Monsieur, you will not think I am taking a liberty with your rod and basket, for I suppose they are yours?"

"I certainly left them on the bank of the stream, Monsieur," said our hero. "I had just hooked a trout."

"Ah!" interrupted the stranger, "here he is, and a very fine fish, nearly three pounds weight. I had some trouble with him, I assure you; he had run out all your line, and then lay still under the bank, but I secured him with five others, which you will find in your basket."

Now though the stranger spoke politely, and was a handsome, gentlemanly man of some two or three and thirty years, yet Lieutenant Thornton did not like either the expression of

his features, or the keen and enquiring glance he cast over his face and person.

"I am obliged to you for your care of my rod," said the Lieutenant, "which I abandoned heedlessly, but I cannot think of depriving you of the proceeds of your skill; therefore I pray you keep the fish."

"Oh! not at all," said the stranger, with a smile; "I can have as many as I like, or require; this part of the stream on both sides for some distance is on my property, and I preserve it."

The colour came into Lieutenant Thornton's cheek as the stranger spoke these words, and he at once said:

"I fear I have unconsciously committed a trespass."

"Not at all, Monsieur! not at all! You are I perceive, quite a stranger to this part of the world; by your accent I should have taken you for an Italian. My name is Gramont; may I have the pleasure of knowing yours. My residence is within half a league, and I shall be

most happy if you are staying in this neighbourhood to shew you better fishing than this stream affords."

"You are very kind," returned our hero, wishing the trout had swallowed the rod, or that he had not come back to look for it. "My name is de Tourville; I am staying for a few days at Coulancourt, with Monsieur de Plessis."

"Ah! indeed; de Tourville," he repeated. "So after all you are French; pardon me for my doubts; I will not detain you, but repeat my wish to form an agreeable acquaintance during your stay; will do myself the pleasure of calling at Coulancourt;" and with a polite bow, saying adieu, and depositing the fishing basket, the stranger sauntered slowly down the stream.

"Now this is anything but pleasant," thought our hero, raising the basket containing six fine trout each over nine pounds weight. "I wish, Monsieur Gramont, you had happened to be a dozen leagues from this. Very odd he did not hear of or speak of the attempt to rob Monsieur Plessis; he must have heard the firing, or seen

the peasantry hurrying to the scene of action; it's very odd."

Giving the surprised Bill the basket of trout, which he examined with a curious eye, wondering very much what such a fine looking fish could possibly want with a little fly, and a fly that in his mind resembled no fly that ever flew, Lieutenant Thornton retraced his steps to the chateau. It was near sun-set as he entered the lawn, and walked up towards the house; Monsieur de Plessis came out from the front door to meet him.

"I hope the young ladies have quite recovered their fright," said Lieutenant Thornton, for the first time taking a steady survey of Jean Plessis's features and person, whom he would not have remembered. He appeared stouter and wore moustachios, which he did not when first they had met in Toulon. In answer to Lieutenant Thornton's enquiry he said, they had quite recovered their spirits, that Madame Plessis had reached the chateau, and that they were all expecting him.

"I was delayed," said our hero, "looking for my rod, which I afterwards found in the hands of a gentleman, who it seems is the proprietor of the land, on both banks of the river in which I was fishing; he called himself Gramont."

"Mon Dieu! that is unfortunate," said Jean Plessis with a start, and a look of uneasiness; "did he seem annoyed at your being on his land? I had no idea he was in this part of the country. I thought he was with his regiment on the frontiers!"

"Then you know him, Monsieur Plessis," asked the Lieutenant.

"No, I cannot say I know him; I have seen him; but I knew his father, who was a terrible and cruel follower of Robespierre. The strange part of the affair is, that his father held possession of Coulancourt and the estates, till forced to give them up after the trial of Madame, when Robespierre lost his head by the axe of the guillotine. Monsieur Gramont fled, and saved his life for a short time. His son, Eugene Gramont, then held a commission in the chasseurs, and after his father's death

managed, through great interest with those in power, to retain the family estate which adjoins Coulancourt; his chateau is not a mile from the place were you were fishing. I shall conclude for the present by telling you that Captain Eugene Gramont bears a very indifferent character in Paris; he is known as a gambler, and a duellist, and a notorious deceiver amongst the weaker sex. However, with the Parisian ladies he is, I have heard, a favourite, and considered a remarkably handsome man; and as he is supposed to be in the receipt of forty thousand francs yearly, he is pronounced rather an advantageous partie; but I strongly suspect, that not only is he himself involved, but his estate also. Now, if he should come here to visit you, it will not do to avoid him altogether."

"But," remarked Lieutenant Thornton, "do you not think the sooner I make an attempt to get out of the country the better. I was going to ask you why I take the name of De Tourville, though it turned out fortunate your telling me

I was to do so, for when Monsieur Gramont requested my name I was prepared."

"Some name," said Jean Plessis, "it was requisite you should take, and as Mademoiselle De Tourville was coming here on a visit, and will afterwards be proceeding to England through Flanders, I thought it a most excellent opportunity for you to pass as her brother, and that you could travel together into Flanders and afford her your protection."

The young man started; an emotion of pleasure he secretly felt sent a glow to his cheek, as he replied:

"Do you not think, Monsieur Plessis, that I am rather young for the guardian of a young and very lovely girl, such as Mademoiselle de Tourville."

Jean Plessis looked into the handsome animated face of the Lieutenant with a smile.

"You are afraid then, Monsieur, of your heart. She is, I confess, a most lovely and fascinating young lady; however, I will relieve your

uneasiness on that head; a widow lady will also accompany her. But here we are at the house, I pray you have patience for a day or two, and I will explain everything, no doubt to your satisfaction. I have ordered other apartments for you, and in them you will find a trunk full of all the requisites for a change of garments. I had them made in Paris judging your size by my own; you promised when a youth to be a tall man."

"You are very considerate and kind," said Lieutenant Thornton surprised, but determined in his own mind to let things take their own course, and no longer to persist in thwarting the kind and generous efforts of his friends to serve him.

The next three or four days passed with our hero like magic; Monsieur Plessis was backwards and forwards at Havre, investigating the affair of the brigands. Madame Plessis be found an extremely agreeable amiable woman, not more than six and thirty. With the two young ladies all restraint had vanished; Mademoiselle Julia

was a lively and charming girl, with an abundance of agreeable chatter of Parisian life. She played the piano well, and sang all the newest Parisian opera airs, declaring at the same time that she was making the most of herself, and that as soon as he heard Mademoiselle de Tourville play and sing it would be all up with her. As yet Marie de Tourville had resisted all attempts to induce her to either touch the piano or harp, there was a singular timidity in her manner, a degree of agitation very evident to our hero, but unaccountable, when speaking or conversing with him.

However, when she addressed him, her voice was soft and even affectionate, though there was less of freedom in her manner than in Julia's.

The fourth or fifth day this restraint began to wear off. She received letters from Paris, her manner altered visibly, and her spirits seemed changed. She ventured to meet the dark eyes of our hero, and one evening he induced her to seat herself at the harp, and favour him with an Italian cansonetta.

Though her voice trembled a little at the commencement, it gradually gained power and depth, and its rich full tones thrilled through the hearer's heart. When concluded, Lieutenant Thornton sat actually enthralled, so powerfully had the tones of her voice awakened some dream of the past

"Ah!" exclaimed Julia Plessis, "I told you, Monsieur, how it would be; adieu to my performance. But I can bear it, for in truth, Marie, you have a marvellous flexibility and a wonderful modulation of tone."

"You so completely fascinated me, Mademoiselle," said Lieutenant Thornton, "that I was unable at once to express my delight and thank you; if there is any one accomplishment above all others that a female can possess to perfection, I love that of singing. It has always had a strange charm over me. I do think, that even in the fiercest strife it would disarm me."

"Well, that is strange," said Madame Plessis, looking up from a piece of fancy work she was amusing herself with. "I knew a lady that be-

came so powerfully affected by music when well and skilfully played, and the human voice added, that she invariably fainted."

"Then I should think, mama," said Julia, laughing, "that she carefully shunned such sirens as Mademoiselle de Tourville."

"No, indeed," returned the mother, "music had such a fascination, that she eagerly sought the society of those who excelled in that accomplishment."

"Which proved," said our hero with a smile, "that the pleasure exceeded the pain."

Monsieur Plessis, as he sat with his new friend late that evening enjoying a glass of his favorite Burgundy, said:

"Do you know that that affair of the brigands is rather a strange one."

"How so; have you not discovered where they came from, or where the rest of the rascals fled to?"

"No; in truth the two dead men no one could recognize. Their attire was the same as the great band of fugitive Chouans, that, driven out

of Brittany two years ago, were massacred wherever they could be found by the Blues—as the Republican soldiers were then styled—pursued across the Seine above Honfleur they dispersed themselves through Normandy committing various depredations, but were supposed to have been finally exterminated. There has been a general hunt after the rest of those brigands, but no trace of them is to be found."

"Curious enough in such a well populated district as this," said the Lieutenant. "However, as you escaped being plundered, it matters but little."

"Yes, as it turned out," said Jean Plessis, "the loss of the money would have been of no great moment. But I had very valuable papers relative to this estate of Coulancourt, and what is even of more consequence, Madame de Coulancourt after some difficulty, a great deal of expense, and nearly two years' delay, has procured certificates of her marriage with Monsieur Granby Arden, and also those of the birth &c., &c., of her two children Julian and Mabel; similar

papers were lost, as you know, in the casket. By the by, that robbery of the contents of the casket was a most strange affair. When Madame de Coulancourt communicated it to me I set out for Toulon, for I felt satisfied that the robbery was committed on board the ship you staid so many hours in, the night you had the care of Mademoiselle Arden. By patient and diligent enquiries, and bribery, I found out that the two galley slaves on board the vessel at that time were both remarkable men, who afterwards figured in the bloody scenes of the Reign of Terror. One perished under the axe of the guillotine, the other the one I strongly suspect of committing the robbery, I cannot trace. With the fall of Robespierre he disappeared, and has not been heard of since. This man's name was Vadier—Augustine Vadier; he was, before the Revolution broke out, a jeweller of great repute, in the Rue St. Pancras. He was famous for his skill in imitating precious stones of all kinds, and was a bad and dissipated man. It was discovered that some ladies of the court, who had sent their jewels to

him to be re-set, were defrauded of the real gems and false ones substituted. Other frauds came out; he had false keys, could open cabinets and extract the contents in a most dexterous manner; and at last was brought to trial for stabbing one of his workmen, who threatened to betray him, and condemned to the galleys for life. He was sent to Toulon. When the galley slaves got loose at the taking of that port by the English, this man made himself notorious after the evacuation, by his blood thirsty revenge upon all aristocrats, got himself into favour with the infamous Feron and the younger Robespierre, rose into power under the elder, and then on his fall, as I before said, disappeared. This man I suspect was the robber of your treasure, for he was known to possess a large sum of money immediately after regaining his emancipation; he and the rest of the liberated slaves committed horrid massacres and robberies."

"Very likely indeed," remarked Lieutenant Thornton; "in fact there is no other way of

accounting for the loss of the contents of the casket. Fortunately Madame De Coulancourt has been able to replace the papers; had she failed, the loss would have been serious. I was going to ask you, Monsieur Plessis, why Mademoiselle De Tourville leaves France and seeks a home in England? that is, if my question is not indiscreet."

"Not at all, Monsieur; far from it. It is a very natural inquiry, as you will most likely be her companion on the journey. This young lady," continued Jean Plessis, "is of good family, as I before said. She is an orphan, and I do not believe she has a relative in all France, besides Madame de Coulancourt."

"Then she is a connection of the late Duke de Coulancourt—as Madame is an Englishwoman."

"Such is the case. Unfortunately, she is not only left without relatives or friends, but actually without fortune of any kind. She has a horror of France, from what she witnessed and suffered, and she ardently longs to reach Eng-

land, where, as she herself intends, to exert her great musical talents for her support."

"Good God!" exclaimed Lieutenant Thornton, looking with an expression of extreme astonishment into the face of the Intendant; "Mademoiselle de Tourville, so young, so beautiful, so pure, and so amiable, thrown upon the heartless world of London!"

"Nay, nay," interrupted Monsieur Plessis, laying his hand with a smile upon the lieutenant's arm, "I say also, God forbid! Do not suppose, for an instant, that the generous and noble-minded Madame de Coulancourt, would permit such a course of life to her young and interesting relative. No, no, she will not;—but it is now late; to-morrow I expect an important letter from Madame, which will finally determine our future movements. When I receive the letter, you shall be made fully acquainted with everything."

CHAPTER X.

THE "Onyx" corvette was commanded by Captain Patrick O'Loughlin. Charles Pole, our hero's comrade on board the "Victory," was second lieutenant, he having had the good fortune to get appointed, through the interest of his uncle, who commanded the "Colossus," seventy four, rejoicing in his heart at having the warm-hearted and gallant O'Loughlin as a commander.

"Ah! Charley, my boy!" said the commander of the corvette, "if we had only Sir Oscar with us."

O'Loughlin would insist on always speaking of our hero by his title which was endeared to him by being that of his noble benefactor.

"Ah, my dear sir," returned the Lieutenant, "if we had, what a glorious cruise we should have."

"Charley, my boy," said the Captain, filling his glass, and passing the bottle to the Lieutenant, for they were sitting in the cabin after dinner; "if you *sir* me when in private, I must put you under arrest, for mutiny, be the powers of war, I must. I can't stand it. I hate it—I'm a rank revolutionist."

"By Jove, that's good!" laughed Charles Pole; "you a revolutionist, why you insist every day of your life on drinking Sir Oscar de Bracy's health, and that he must always be called 'Sir Oscar;' he would kick against that himself if he were here."

"He's a trump; don't bother me about titles, they are all very well when they and the wearer fit, and he's fit to be a duke. I wish I had been on board the 'Diamond' that unlucky day; I'd

have had that cursed 'Vengeance' out, or been blown to atoms."

"A sail to windward, sir," said a curly haired young midshipman, popping his head into the cabin; "she appears a large ship."

Up jumped the commander and his lieutenant, and the next moment they were on deck.

They were then some five leagues off the coast of France, in a line with Ushant. It was blowing strong from the east-north-east, with a good deal of sea on. The "Onyx" was under single reefed topsails, her top-gallant masts housed. It was after sunset, with every appearance of a dirty night. Captain O'Loughlin directed his glass in the direction of the strange sail, whose topsails could be seen with the naked eye. She was coming up rapidly, under double reefed topsails, and he pronounced her to be a frigate, but whether French or English he could not say, but half an hour would decide. The corvette being on an enemy's coast, and cruising for the purpose of destroying privateers or taking prizes, she was always ready for action.

The "Onyx" was noted for her splendid sailing qualities. She carried sixteen long nine-pounders, and two eighteen-pound carronades in the bridle ports, and two twelve-pound carronades on the quarter deck and forecastle. Her full complement of men and boys being one hundred and forty-five, but having taken two prizes, her first lieutenant and twenty-five men, and two midshipmen were absent. Shortly after, as the stranger came nearer, signals were hoisted, which not being answered, Captain O'Loughlin became convinced that she was an enemy, and of vastly superior force. In fact, she soon convinced them, notwithstanding the fast increasing gloom and the commencement of a fog, that she was a thirty-two gun frigate, of double the tonnage of the "Onyx." As she came nearer she hoisted French colours, and commenced firing her bow-chasers.

Captain O'Loughlin, though quite justified in getting out of the way of so formidable an antagonist, resolved, nevertheless, to annoy her as much as possible. Having cut away the jolly boat

to make room for four stern chasers, the "Onyx" opened fire from them, as soon as the French frigate got fairly within range, whose shot was flying over them. In a few minutes the fog which kept increasing, put an end to the combat for the time.

"We must get the weather-gage of that fellow," said Captain O'Loughlin to his only lieutenant, Charles Pole, "in case we should meet again."

Accordingly the "Onyx" hauled her wind to the eastward. Towards seven o'clock next morning she perceived her late antagonist close on her larboard quarter; whilst the commander, with a speaking trumpet, hailed, ordering the corvette to strike.

To this a broadside was returned, and the next moment the frigate ran her bowsprit right over the starboard bow of the corvette; but as the wind was blowing very fresh, her gib-boom broke short off, and the corvette forging ahead, freed herself. Just then a sailor threw himself from the French ship into the rigging of the

"Onyx," and probably in the confusion would have been cut down, had he not shouted in a loud voice:—

"Hold hard, my men! I am an Englishman!"

The denseness of the fog again separated the two ships, after exchanging each a broadside, by which one man was killed and three wounded on board the "Onyx." Captain O'Loughlin altered his course, and stood away to the westward to repair and splice his rigging, which was desperately cut up.

"Where is the man who threw himself on board?" demanded Captain O'Loughlin, "bring him aft."

It was then broad daylight, though the fog still covered the whole surface of the sea. In the course he was steering, Captain O'Loughlin did not again expect to see his late antagonist, from whom he considered he had a most fortunate escape, as she appeared full of men. He was walking the deck with Lieutenant Pole, when the seaman who had leaped on board, came upon the quarter-deck attended by the quarter-master.

"This is the young man, sir," said the latter, touching his hat; "he refuses to give any explanation except to the Captain of the ship."

O'Loughlin looked at the stranger. He was a tall, slight, handsome young man, of about two or three and twenty; his complexion evidently tanned by a southern climate. There was a manly, independent manner in his bearing and look as he stood calmly facing the Commander of the "Onyx."

"Well, sir," said Captain O'Loughlin, "what have you to say for yourself? Were you a prisoner on board that ship—but, first of all, what was her name?"

"The frigate 'Prudente,' forty guns, and three hundred men," replied the young man.

"The deuce it was," cried Captain O'Loughlin; "then we had a fortunate escape. Pray what were you doing on board?"

"Waiting," returned the young man, in a somewhat hasty tone, "for an opportunity to get away. Sir," he continued, advancing a step or two, and with a flush on his cheek, "my

story is too long to tell you here; I am an Englishman and a gentleman; my name is Julian Arden, and"—

"What! Be the powers of war!" exclaimed O'Loughlin, springing forward, and catching the surprised young man by the hand; "Julian Arden! the lost brother of Mabel, and the son of the Duchesse de Coulancourt!"

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed the young man, trembling with emotion, and clasping the Captain's hand with a grasp of intense feeling; "who are you, who greet my ear with names engraved upon my heart—never forgotten through years of suffering and degradation?" Julian Arden paused; his eyes were filled with tears, and his voice failed him from agitation.

Patrick O'Loughlin wrung the young man's hand, almost equally affected; but, taking him by the arm, whilst Charles Pole and the quartermaster Brown stood considerably surprised, he said:

"Come with me, Mr. Arden; you could not have stumbled upon a man who can so much

relieve your mind as I can. Thank God for this strange and most unexpected meeting."

Julian Arden felt a sensation of happiness he had not experienced for years. He followed the Commander into his cabin, and then the delighted O'Loughlin—whose generous nature never felt so elated, or experienced so much pleasure, as when rendering a service to a friend—again warmly shook the young man by the hand, told him to consider himself as much at home in the little "Onyx" as himself, and, summoning the steward, ordered him to place refreshments and wine on the table.

"I am so overpowered, Captain O'Loughlin, by your extreme kindness, and so bewildered by hearing so suddenly intelligence that fills my heart with rapture—for I judge, by your words and manner, that I may expect to hear that my beloved mother and sister are both alive—whilst alas! for years I have mourned them as dead."

"It delights me," said O'Loughlin, "to be able to positively assure you that not only is your mother, Madame de Coulancourt, alive,

but she had been, when last we heard of her, restored to her estate of Coulancourt, and was residing in Paris. Your sister, Mabel Arden, who has grown into a most lovely girl, is in England, residing with a French lady, a Madame Volney. There is, or will be, time enough for mutual explanations this evening, provided we do not again encounter the 'Prudente'—an ugly customer for the little 'Onyx.' I wish my consort was up with us, we should then be able to manage our friend."

"The 'Prudente' is a very fine craft," said Julian Arden, "but her commander is one of the most vulgar tyrants that ever trod a deck."

"Now, make yourself comfortable," said the Commander, as the steward placed the breakfast equipage on the table; for the day was yet young, and neither the Commander of the "Onyx," nor his officer, had broken their fast.

"You can have a suit of Charley Pole's garments to put on, instead of that dress. You are much of a height. Nature made me a head too tall, like my poor friend Sir Oscar de Bracy

—ah! that's the man who saved your sister Mabel, and carried her safe to England. Be the gods of war! when you hear all, you will love him as I do."

"Sir Oscar de Bracy!" repeated Julian Arden; "why, my mother's brother is a Sir Oscar de Bracy; surely you do not mean him?"

"No, my dear fellow, I mean his son; however, eat your breakfast; an empty stomach is a worse enemy than a forty-gun frigate—you may beat off the one, but you must satisfy the other. Steward, call down Lieutenant Pole, or the steak will be cold."

Lieutenant Pole and Julian Arden were soon introduced to each other; Charles Pole remembered all the circumstances of the affair at Toulon, and William Thornton's care of little Mabel Arden, so that, in fact, Julian appeared as if he had come amongst old friends.

"Here's the prog, Charley," said the Captain, helping himself to a plentiful allowance of a very tempting breakfast pie—for the "Onyx" was capitally victualled, and had a first-rate

cook. Her worthy Captain, if he loved fighting, also loved good cheer, and no commander could be more beloved by his officers and crew than Patrick O'Loughlin.

Having finished breakfast, Lieutenant Pole took Julian Arden to his cabin, to rig him out in a suit of his shore-going clothes, whilst Captain O'Loughlin proceeded on deck. The wind had lulled considerably, and the fog looked as if inclined to lift. The reefs were shaken out of the topsails, and the course of the corvette altered, standing in for the land, hoping to fall in with her consort. About mid-day the fog cleared; they could distinguish the land about five leagues off, but no sign of their late antagonist; and Captain O'Loughlin resolved to run down along the coast, and cruise off the mouth of the Seine. During the day nothing was seen worth giving chase to—a few fishing luggers, and one or two small coasters, standing in for the land. Lieutenant Pole and Julian Arden made their appearance on deck, the latter dressed in the former's garments. He

was a remarkably handsome young man, slight, but well made, and very active. As they walked the quarter-deck, Captain O'Loughlin made the latter fully acquainted with all the particulars he knew respecting Madame Coulancourt and Mabel, and of the property and title of the Etherton's falling to Captain Arden, his uncle, and then to his son Howard, and mentioned the cruel and unjust conduct of the latter towards Mabel.

"You are now, in point of fact, Sir Julian Etherton," added Captain O'Loughlin, as the narrative was brought to a conclusion.

"Yes," said the young man, his cheek flushing, as he thought of the bitter treatment and contemptuous words of Sir Howard Etherton towards his sister; "yes, and, please God, I will assert those rights; though I may, till I can communicate with my mother, find some difficulty; as I am, as I now stand, as nobody in the eyes of the law. Do you know, Captain O'Loughlin, I have just been wishing you could land me on the coast to the eastward of Havre; Coulan-

court is within a league of the sea. I remember every yard of the country. I may say I am almost a Frenchman, in manner and speaking the language, having passed almost all my life in France and with Frenchmen. My mother is in Paris; and I have no doubt of being able to make my way there without any suspicion being attached to me." *

"By Jove! it is not a bad idea," said Captain O'Loughlin, "but your dress, and the want of French money. Be the powers of war! we must capture some fellow, and supply ourselves with the needful. It is possible you might pick up some intelligence of my poor friend, Sir Oscar, who, I fear, is a prisoner, with Sir Sidney Smith; at all events we will run down along the coast, and see what is to be done."

In the evening, after the watch was set, the weather fine, and the wind blowing from the land, the officers of the "Onyx" were assembled in the Captain's cabin, enjoying a social bottle of

* Passports were not, at the period of the French Directory, framed in the same manner as they were some years afterwards.

wine, having been invited by their Commander. When only Lieutenant Pole and Julian Arden were left with the Captain, the latter gave them the following account of his escape from the perils of the revolutionary bloodhounds, and his adventures afterwards:—

"I was scarcely sixteen years of age," began Julian Arden, "when the demons, let loose by the revolution at Lyons, seized me one morning in the saloon with my mother and sister. Mocking their cries and lamentations, they tore me forcibly away, and dragging me through the streets filled with a revolutionary rabble, who seemed to revel in the miseries of the victims driven along with myself, they consigned me to the tender mercies of Marachat, the notorious and ferocious head jailer of the prisons of Lyons.

"'There,' said my brutal conductors, giving me a blow that drove me on my face with force, causing the blood to flow down my cheeks, 'there's a spawn of an aristocrat for you, Marachat, treat him tenderly, and do not make him too fat with kindness.'

"'Ah! my brave garçon, be not afraid,' returned the jailer, 'I will tell my chef de Cuisine to be sparing of his lard.'

"Ordering one of the turnkeys to take charge of me, I was hurried along and thrust into a damp and dismal cell, in which were more than a hundred and fifty unfortunate wretches half starved, scantily clothed, and many suffering from disease; robbing the guillotine, as our vile jailer said when any died, of its just dues. I was young, not too young to think, but I will not pain you with minutely detailing my thoughts or my sufferings. This frightful cell was not more than thirty-five feet long and ten broad, and so feebly lighted from above from a slit in the wall, that until well accustomed to the place I could scarcely see. After some eight or ten days' incarceration three of our number died, and for four days their bodies were left by those accursed wretches before they were removed. One day I was made to approach the wretch Marachat, a jailer held a lantern till its light fell upon my features.

"'Ah!' said the savage, 'I see my cook takes care you shall not grow too fat. I have to tell you that your friend, Collet d'Herbois, has taken care of your worthy mother and sister; the glorious guillotine has cut their dainty heads off!'

"I shrieked in agony, and maddened, flew at my jailer, but with a blow of the heavy keys he carried, he struck me bleeding to the ground. Oh, what I suffered! when a kind old man, one of the prisoners, restored me to life and sense by bathing my face with his scanty allowance of water.

"'My poor boy! My poor boy!' sobbed the old man, 'just the age of my poor Phillip!'

"'Surely—surely!' I exclaimed, 'they could not murder a child. My loved sister was but a child!'

"'Not murder a child!' repeated the old man hysterically; '*Eh, mon Dieu!* babes in the arms are butchered by those fiends Herbois and Ronsin. When they entered the city with two thousand of their blood stained followers, did not

those two wretches stand gazing with frightful exultation upon two hundred victims tied to trees, whom cannons loaded with grape tore to pieces, and when their soldiers bayoneted those that survived they laughed madly with joy. Oh, merciful God!' exclaimed the old man, waving his skeleton arms wildly in the air, 'wilt thou permit such sin to triumph?' the old man's head sank upon his breast.

"The next day he was relieved from his misery by death. The third morning from that event half our number were led out, more dead than alive, to be shot down like dogs, and for no earthly crime. Thirty only besides myself remained five days afterwards, when one morning Marachat entered the cell with some turnkeys.

"'Come, my beauties!' said this wretch, 'let me have a look at you all. I have cleared out my saloons, and they are getting tired of shooting and bayoneting. More's the pity. Let me see how many more of you are left fit to serve your country. Ah! my little aristocrat, have you escaped the guillotine and shooting. Lucky

fellow; come, I think you will do for me, you're young,' and examining the rest he selected nine. '*Morbleu*, only ten of you fit to smell powder, after all my care. *Tonnerre de Dieu!* I must discharge my chef de Cuisine. There, garçons, take those fellows into the yard, the rest of these miserable wretches may be shot to-morrow, they are good for nothing else.'

"We were driven out into a court-yard, there our arms were pinioned, and shortly afterwards we were put into a covered cart. I must have been blessed with a singularly strong constitution to have survived these trials under which I beheld strong men die. I did live certainly, but I was greatly emaciated. Several other carts were filled with wretched looking objects, and as soon as they had their complement they drove off, escorted by a troop of Dragoons. We were taken to Brest, and were intended to supply the loss the French fleet had sustained by the guillotine. Many captains were beheaded, a rear-admiral imprisoned, and numbers of seamen declared disaffected were executed.

"After being in the hospital a fortnight, where I was tolerably well cared for, I was placed on board a guard ship. There was a kind and humane surgeon in the hospital, to whom I told my story, stating I was an Englishman by birth.

"'Mother and father English? Keep that to yourself, my lad,' said the surgeon; 'as surely as you say you are English you will be shot.'

"I found I was entered on the books as Julian Coulancourt. Brest at that time was in a state of intense excitement. The tri-color was formally adopted as the national flag, and the navy of Republican France declared cleansed and regenerated. Though told by that villain Marachat, the tool of Collet d'Herbois, that my beloved mother and sister had perished, there were at times moments when I cheered myself with the idea that they yet lived. I knew that Herbois was the fiendish persecutor of my mother, and his tool Marachat might have spoken falsely to torture me. Why I was not taken out and shot with the first group is a mystery to me.

However, the very idea that they might still live, enabled me to sustain the hardships I went through. Divine Hope, the sheet anchor of man, held me up against Despair.

"At this time it was decreed by the National Convention that the captain or any officer of any ship of the line carrying the Republican flag, who should haul down the national flag to an enemy however superior, unless actually in danger of sinking, should be stigmatized as a traitor, and suffer death. It was my lot to be placed on board the seventy-four gun ship "Vengeance," then Commanded by Noel François Renaudin, one of the bravest and at the same time kindest hearted commanders then in the service of the Republic. I have good reason to remember him and his gallant little son, then a mere child, scarcely more than eleven years old.

CHAPTER XI.

"At this time the French fleet was ready for sea, and I experienced the most painful thoughts; here I was, an Englishman by birth and feelings, about to be forced to fight against my countrymen, though determined in my own mind when the moment arrived I would refuse to do so, and take the consequences. As long as my duty consisted in aiding to work the ship, or any seaman's duty, I would do it willingly. At times I felt sanguine of being able to escape on board an English ship. Some days after leaving Brest it was my extreme good fortune to save the life

of Captain Renaudin's son. This fine young boy was full of life and spirit; his father was a widower, who doted on him; and Alfred was his only child.

"He used frequently to play about the quarter-deck, and would manage to climb up the mizen rigging, though his father usually prevented him. One day, the ship going through the water at the rate of seven knots, and a cross swell; Captain Renaudin was writing in his cabin, when the young boy came on deck, and shortly after began climbing up the mizen rigging. I was then employed doing some trifling job to the ratlines, when the boy passed me, laughing. I begged him earnestly to come back, and even called to the officer on the quarter-deck. He heard me, and looking up, beheld young Renaudin.

"'My dear boy, come down,' exclaimed the lieutenant, 'it's naughty of you to go there. Your papa will be angry.'

"At that moment the ship rolled to port; somehow the child lost his footing, and fell; I

grasped his garments, but lost my footing; and striking my feet forcibly against the rigging, we both fell into the sea. I did this to avoid touching the side, which would have killed us both. I had been a good swimmer from a very early period, so I kept the child's head up. Oh, what a brave child that was—he was all alive, and without fear, notwithstanding the terrible shock with which we came against the water, going under several feet. A scene of indescribable confusion ensued on board the ship. The father wanted to plunge into the sea, though he was incapable of swimming; but the first lieutenant held him, saying:—

"'There is no fear, that brave youth swims like a duck; the cutter is out, and will reach them in a few minutes.'

"This little dialogue, whilst the ship was hove in stays, was related to me afterwards by the first lieutenant. In a few minutes the boat was lowered and manned, and in less than ten minutes, we were lifted into her. Young

Renaudin put his arms round my neck, and kissing me said:—

"'Papa will always love you, and make you rich; and I will love you dearly. I was a very naughty boy.'

"Oh, how the father pressed the child to his heart, the tears streaming down his cheeks! he shook my hand with fervour, merely saying:—

"'Go, change your clothes; I owe you my boy's life.'

"The next day I was sent for to the quarter-deck; the first lieutenant came up to me, saying I was to follow him to the Captain's state room. Alfred Renaudin, nothing the worse for his dip, rushed to me, and threw his arms round my neck, saying:—

"'Mind, papa, what you promised me, and I'll never be naughty again.'

"'I owe you my child's life," said Captain Renaudin, looking at me with great attention, and, I thought, some surprise. 'I find you are entered on the ship's books as Julian Coulancourt—is that your name?'

"'No, Monsieur; Coulancourt is my mother's name. Mine is Julian Arden. I am an Englishman by birth.'

"'How is that?' exclaimed the Captain; 'there is but one family in France of the name of Coulancourt, and a high family it is. If your mother was a Coulancourt, how do you bear the name of Arden?'

"I explained as briefly as possible, to the great surprise of the Captain and his first officer.

"'Yours, and your unfortunate mother's and sister's fate,' said Captain Renaudin, with emotion, 'is a sad specimen of the mad acts committed by monsters, for I will not call them men. I believe every word you have told me. I regret you are of English birth, for I will not insult you by even supposing you would fight against your countrymen. My intention was to place you on the quarter-deck. Now I cannot do so; but I will remove you from your present position, till I have an opportunity of restoring you to your country. As you are entered on

the ship's books, I must continue you on them, but you shall remain with my son, nominally his tutor; thus, in any engagement with your countrymen, you will have nothing to reproach yourself with. To me you will always be dear, for you have saved that which is dearer to me than life.'

"From this noble, excellent man I received every kindness and attention. I was supplied with proper garments by one of the midshipmen, and allotted a berth in the Captain's cabin for young Renaudin and myself, and had all my meals at the captain's table. Some of my old associates in the forecastle, viewed my transition from the galley to the Captain's cabin, with envy and sneers; they imputed my exaltation to the simple act of saving the captain's son; but such was not the case; had I been of low birth, and one of the crew, he would have amply rewarded me, but never have admitted me to an intercourse with himself and his officers; who, hearing my story, considered me their equal, and were exceedingly kind.

"Monsieur Renaudin was a man of high birth and refined mind. We often spoke of the horrors enacted in France during the Reign of of Terror, and shuddered to think of Frenchmen having degenerated into demons. He knew my mother's husband, the Duke de Coulancourt, and had heard of my beloved parent's cruel misfortunes, but had no knowledge of her fate. He thought it too probable she and my little sister had perished under the monstrous rule of Collet d'Herbois.

"I became attached to Alfred Renaudin, and did all in my power to instruct him; fortunately, before my family became victims to the Revolution, every pains had been taken with my education, so, though scarcely seventeen, I may, without vanity, say, that I had profited by the masters I had. I will pass over a period of sixteen months, and come to the eventful morning when the French fleet, of which the 'Vengeance' was one, was attacked by the British fleet under Lord Howe. Of this tremendous and glorious action, ending in victory to the Eng-

lish, I can only speak as it affected the 'Vengeance.' I requested Captain Renaudin's permission to remain on the quarter-deck. He hesitated, saying:—'My dear young friend, you will be risking life uselessly;' but I prevailed; I need not say my heart beat quicker as I gazed out over the broad ocean, and beheld it covered with noble vessels, all preparing for a deadly strife. I counted five-and-twenty stately ships; but no doubt you know all about that memorable fight, Captain O'Loughlin, better than I can relate it to you."

"Yes," returned O'Loughlin, "but never from an eye-witness; moreover, there are some doubts thrown upon the exact cause of the foundering of the 'Vengeance.' I pray you, therefore, to omit no particular that you witnessed."

Julian Arden then continued:—

"I said I counted five-and-twenty stately ships, all under full canvas, for the weather was very moderate, and the sea smooth. The ships, shortly after sighting each other distinctly, reduced their canvass to single reefed topsails.

The French ships kept signaling, and presently as they read the signals, they all drew up in line, east and west. On our starboard quarter was the 'Achille,' on the other, the 'Patriote,' or the 'Jeannapes,' at this moment I forget which, but as I gazed in breathless anxiety, the breeze rapidly freshened, and then the English ships filled, and stood right for our line, and, as it appeared to me, each ship singling out its antagonist. I do not know the name of the ship, but she was by far the largest in the British fleet."

"That was the 'Queen Charlotte,'" said Captain O'Loughlin; "Lord Howe's ship of one hundred guns"

"Ah, now I remember, so it was," said Julian. "she appeared to be bearing down right upon us; but suddenly she broke off from her course, and the 'Vengeance' opened fire upon her, which she did not return; but immediately setting her top-gallant sails, shot past us, and ranged up abreast of the 'Achille,' who at once commenced a fierce fire upon her, and immediately after, the

action became general, and to my unpractised eye, a scene of intense confusion; what with the thundering of the cannon, the flapping of the monstrous sails, as the several ships tacked or hove to, the cheers from some of the British ships, and the thunder of the huge blocks, as the sheets and tacks, cut by the balls, allowed them to dash wildly about, knocking against yards and masts, altogether created an astounding din. Still there was an intense excitement in the scene, that left no thought of danger to intrude itself. Thus the action continued: the 'Vengeance,' most admirably handled, her Captain as cool and as calm as at his dinner-table; two of his officers were struck down by his side, and splinters were knocked about like chips, when I suddenly observed a ship—the first Lieutenant told me was the 'Brunswick'—steer directly between us and the 'Achille.' I then heard Captain Renaudin give his orders to close; the 'Vengeance' shot ahead, there no longer remained an opening, and thus the 'Brunswick' ran foul of us, with a great shock. My first

idea was to run up the rigging and get into the rigging of the English ship, but I should, at such a moment, no doubt have lost my life.

"In this state our yards and rigging were entangled. We bore along through the water, the men of the 'Vengeance' keeping up an incessant fire of musketry, and from her thirty-six pounders, loaded with old nails, and jagged pieces of iron, a terrible fire was poured into the 'Brunswick.' I had just mounted upon a large case near the flag-staff, and from thence I could see on the deck of the 'Brunswick' where the shot told with terrible effect. It made my heart throb painfully. The next instant I saw the 'Achille' bearing down also to the 'Brunswick,' but the 'Achille' had only her fore and mizen mast standing, and a terrible, and well-directed broadside from the 'Brunswick' totally dismasted her. Strange to say, all this time we were locked together.

The crew of the 'Brunswick' taking advantage of the rolling of the 'Vengeance,' depressed the muzzles of their guns, and fired into

us most destructive broadsides, ripping and tearing our sides terribly ; but the 'Vengeance' kept up so incessant a fire from the tops, and from our decks, that it was utterly impossible for me to get on board the 'Brunswick.' A violent squall striking both ships, they tore asunder, snapping ropes, rigging, and yards, like packthread—for nearly two hours those two great ships had been locked together, the whole time keeping up a terrible fire. It was now that we received what I may call the mortal wound that caused the 'Vengeance' to founder. Attacked by the 'Brunswick,' and another seventy-four-gun-ship at the same time, our gallant Commander exerted all his skill, assisted by the courage of his crew, to contend against these odds, but the British ships were also worked with consummate skill; a shot struck our rudder, another shot knocked a huge hole under our counter, through which the water rushed in with great violence. As I was gazing intently on the scene, a ball struck the case on which I stood, breaking it to atoms, and throwing me violently

against the starboard bulwarks, but I was quite sensible, and very little hurt. The state of the 'Vengeance' was now terrible, numbers of her crew were now lying dead and dying, from the fire of three ships. I caught a glimpse of Captain Renaudin standing on a carronade vehemently cheering on his crew. Just then as I was getting on my feet, young Alfred Renaudin rushed out of the cabin, and seeing me just rising, rushed with a cry to my side, saying:

"'Oh! Julian, where is *mon cher* Papa? Are you wounded?'

"'No, not wounded, only a little stunned; but you must not stay here.' Seeing his gaze fixed upon the body of a man lying dead within a yard or two of us. 'Come below.'

"'No, no,' cried the child, 'I'm no coward, but I am too little to fight.' As I was leading him to the cabin, Captain Renaudin and his First Lieutenant came up, followed by two of the crew; they unfurled a flag as a signal that the 'Vengeance' surrendered. Captain Renaudin looked serious if not distressed.

"'We are sinking fast,' he said, as he embraced his boy; "Mon Dieu, we have lost the ship, but we have done our duty;' and in truth they had. The 'Vengeance' had fought three line of battle-ships. The firing had ceased on board the 'Brunswick.' She had lost her mizen-mast and all her boats; so had the 'Vengeance,' all but one small one. There was great excitement on board, for all knew they were sinking.

"'Into the small boat Captain Renaudin desired me to get, and take his son with me and four men, and pull on board the nearest frigate that could afford assistance to save the crew. I slid down a rope first into the boat ready to receive young Alfred, but six or seven men slung down the rope, and one with his knife cut the warp.

"'Rascal!' I exclaimed, 'what did you do that for, there are neither oars, nor sail in the boat,' and she drifted away from the 'Vengeance.'

"'Hold your jaw,' said one of the men, 'you

skulking rascal, or I'll stick my knife in you.' I knocked the man over the side and shouted to the 'Vengeance,' but the next moment a chance shot struck the boat and cut her nearly in two, plunging us all into the water. As I scrambled up on the bottom of the boat, I beheld the main and fore-mast of the 'Vengeance' fall, carrying away the mizen, but I had scarcely gained a firm hold on the boat's bottom, when a wild, and never-to-be-forgotten cheer startled me, and attracted my attention, despite my awkward situation. I looked in the direction of the sound. The cheer came from the lion-hearted crew of the poor 'Vengeance.' She was going down; one moment she surged upwards; again another cheer. A tri-colour was waved in triumph as she disappeared with her living freight of brave, devoted men beneath the waves.

"'I was horror-struck; I looked at those clinging to the broken boat; three were there, the others had been killed by the shot; but the savage culotte, who had threatened to stick me

with his knife was one, and he glared at me savagely.

"'Knock that spy and lubber off,' said he to the two men near me; 'she wont bear up us four long.' The ruffian himself edged towards me, and struck at me with his clenched fist; he had lost his knife; but I was strong and active, and not easily frightened, and in the struggle I knocked him off, and somehow he got under the boat for we saw no more of him. The other two cursed me frightfully, but they could not swim, and they were afraid to move, as the boat was anything but a steady support. I looked around, hoping to have a chance of being picked up by some English vessel. The engagement still continued, and several shots tore up the water close beside us, and one stray ball struck the water, and then bounded right over us. At no great distance lay a French ship totally dismasted, but a shout from the two men in the boat caused me to turn round, and then I perceived a frigate, with the tri-colour flying,

coming right down for us. She perceived us in time, and backing her topsails under our lee, we dropped down to her. She hailed to know who we were, and the men replied, we belong to the 'Vengeance;" ropes were thrown to us, and after a struggle we were hauled upon the deck. The two rascals were no sooner on the deck of the frigate, than they accused me of drowning their comrade by striking him down, when he was trying to save himself by clinging to the shattered boat. I soon found I had got amongst a crew of regular *sans culotte,* most violent, out and out Republicans. The frigate was the 'Volentier,' which had taken no part in the fight. She was proceeding to Brest, with the news of the result of the engagement between the two fleets. Her Captain, formerly the skipper of a merchant craft, was the greatest brute I ever encountered. He ordered me, without asking a single question, to be put in irons; this was done, and I lay in my wet garments the whole of the night; to attempt to disclose my being an Englishman would have insured my condemnation;

fortunately not one of the officers on board the 'Vengeance' had betrayed my not being a Frenchman, therefore I was so far safe.

"'The next day I was hauled up and brought before the Captain, who was pacing the quarter-deck half-drunk; fortunately for me, his first lieutenant was a humane man, and a gentleman, and as I afterwards found, had served with great disgust under Captain Baudet, and was resolved when the frigate reached Brest, to get an exchange into another ship.

"'So,' said the Captain, stepping close to me, and staring into my face, his eyes bloodshot, and his face purple with repeated potations; 'So, you young rascal, you murdered your comrade; instead of helping a drowning man, you finished him.'

"'Begging your pardon, Monsieur.'

"'Sacre tonnerre! you villain, how dare you, you scum of the jails, how dare you beg my pardon? I'll commence by giving you a couple of dozen, that will teach you to speak respectfully to your superior. Take him away, and'—

"'Stay,' said Lieutenant Veillot, calmly and quietly, and, turning to his Commander—who seemed somewhat in awe of his lieutenant, and for a good reason, he could not work his ship without him, and had no more notion of bringing her into action than a school-boy—he said some few words to the Captain, who looked sulky, but at length said, 'Eh bien, you can do so.' Lieutenant Veillot then said, 'Send those two men aft belonging to the "Vengeance." The two rascals came swaggering up, and then stood eyeing me with looks of malice and triumph.

"'Now, harkee, my men,' said the Lieutenant, 'if you do not give me a true statement, and answer the questions I ask you honestly, you will pay for it, and get your backs well scratched; for I strongly suspect you are telling a lie when you say this young stripling murdered your comrade. Now answer me; what is the name of this youth?'

"'He was entered in the ship's books, Julian Coulancourt.'

"'Well, what was he—was he before the mast?'

"'Yes,' returned the men, 'he was before the mast, rated second class.'

"'Then how comes he to be attired in plain clothes and garments only worn by gentlemen? He did not dress in that manner, working as a common sailor.'

"'He jumped overboard—any one of us would have done the same—to save Captain Renaudin's son, and the Captain, to reward him, gave him those clothes, and kept him to attend on his son.'

"'Is this a correct statement, young man,' said the Lieutenant, turning to me.

"'Very nearly so, Monsieur,' I returned. 'Captain Renaudin, finding I was connected with the Duke de Coulancourt's family'—

"'Why, curse your impudence!' burst out Captain Baudet, 'there are no dukes now; the guillotine has weeded our poor country of all those gentry. There, I have had quite enough of this examination; I don't care a sous whether you

murdered your comrade or not—it won't bring him to life again. You were entered on the books of the 'Vengeance' as seaman, second class; go forward and do your duty; and, harkee ye, if I catch you skulking, or playing the gentleman, I'll make your back a curiosity to look at—go, and the brute walked off.

"Lieutenant Veillot bit his lip. 'Go, my lad,' said he kindly to me; 'do your duty, and you need not be afraid. When we get to Brest things may turn out differently; you shall not be punished for nothing, at all events.'

"Here was a miserable prospect for me; obliged to herd with the very worst class of seamen, the very refuse of the prisons, whereas the 'Vengeance,' excepting in a very few cases indeed, were thorough good seamen. However, there was no help for it. I consoled myself with the reflection that, on arriving at Brest, through the kindness of the first Lieutenant, I might get exchanged into another ship, or manage to get away, and trust to my thorough knowledge of French to escape detection, and get

to Paris. The day before we reached Brest, in a violent squall, one of the sailors saved from the 'Vengeance' fell from the foreyards and fractured his skull. Before he died he stated to the surgeon that his accusation against me was false; that it was his comrade intended killing me, and that, in my defence, I struck him into the water.

"This confession did me no good with our brutal Captain. He only swore he'd watch me the sharper, as I was an accursed spawn of an aristocrat. Nevertheless it was satisfactory to me, this confession, as many of the crew of the 'Volentier' treated me less unkindly.

"Misfortune still persecuted me. For some days the first-Lieutenant complained of illness, but struggled against it. The day we entered Brest he was seized with fever, and became slightly delirious, and was taken ashore to the naval hospital. Captain Baudet, with a mocking laugh, said to me the next day, as I happened to pass near him on some duty I was put to do:

"'So, you young aristocrat, you have lost your friend. Never mind, Sacre Dieu! I'll take care of you. You don't quit this ship; I'll have you closely watched. I have not seen your delicate back yet, but don't despair.'

"It was with difficulty I could keep my temper, but I made no reply. I was watched with a vengeance. This low-bred ruffian seemed to have a vast delight in inflicting indignities and insults upon any one he conceived an aristocrat by birth. He thought I was one of the Coulancourt family, and the most degrading duties were given me to perform. I could have no redress. No matter how degrading the tasks, I performed them, because I knew the wretch would inflict an indignity I could scarcely survive. However, all attempts at escape were put an end to by our being sent to the coast of Africa, with the fifty-gun frigate 'Experiment,' two other ships and two brig corvettes. We sailed on an expedition against the town of Sierra Leone. Fortunately for me, our brutal and half-mad Commander drank himself into a

fit of *delirium tremens*, and remained confined to his cabin, under the care of the surgeon, till we arrived, after a boisterous voyage, off the coast, and shortly after, the ships commenced a heavy fire upon the town, which offered no resistance whatever. The second day the British ensign was hauled down as a token of surrender; nevertheless, the two frigates kept up an incessant fire into the streets of the town, as we afterwards heard, killing and wounding many. At length it was resolved to land. I was rejoiced to hear this, for, come what would, I resolved to escape, and take my chance of fortune. Our little squadron was commanded by a Monsieur Theodore Allemand. Each ship told off a certain number, and, as luck would have it, I formed one from our ship. We had already lost many men by the pestiferous climate, and had many sick; amongst the sick was our Captain, or I do not think I should have formed one of the landing party. Our surgeon was of opinion that the Captain would not live, and the first lieutenant, who would take the com-

mand if he died, felt rather anxious that he should not; the crew would not, however, have gained much by the exchange. Everything being prepared, the men told off into the boats. We pulled in for the town, and a miserable-looking place it appeared. Before the boat's keels touched the beach the town was totally abandoned by its inhabitants; so that when we entered, the officers were not able to restrain the men, and, with a loud shout, away they went, breaking into the houses, plundering and destroying everything, even setting fire to the houses. Watching my opportunity, I dashed out through the back window of a large house, threw away my musket, and made directly for the woods. When I reached cover, regardless of reptiles or wild beasts, I threw myself into a thicket, and then fell, somewhat exhausted by the run I had had. From where I was I could see the smoke of the burning town, for they wantonly set fire to the church, the Company's warehouses, and all the buildings belonging to the English residents. As I lay hid in this

kind of jungle, I began to think what I should do; where had the inhabitants fled to, where procure food. It was the month of September. As I lay, perfectly still, I suddenly caught the sound of voices not very far from me. I listened, and became convinced I heard females speaking. The jungle was extremely thick and entangled. As I cautiously moved on towards the sounds, I distinctly heard a man's voice, and even distinguished the words, 'Don't be alarmed; it's nothing.' 'Ah!' said I, joyfully, 'here are some of the English inhabitants of the town, hiding.' So I sprang up, and, without hesitation, pushed my way through the bushes, and, thrusting aside a dense mass of vegetation, a man started up, presented a pistol, and fired without a word of warning.

"This was rather an uncourteous mode of salutation, but as it only knocked my hat off, and raised the skin of my head, I was well satisfied; but, thinking I might be favoured with a second, I called out, 'I am English—a fugitive from the French ships.'

"'Why the deuce did'nt you say so,' said the man; 'I might have killed you.'

"I now, to my surprise, found myself face to face with the party hiding; besides the man there were two females, Europeans, and two black girls. The man was attired in a light European dress made of cotton; he advanced towards me with a drawn sword in his hand, whilst the females, two young and lovely girls, stood half-frightened, half-bewildered. The Englishman said:

"'It was very foolish, young man, for you to burst in upon us so rashly. Knowing the rascally Frenchmen were plundering and firing the town, I mistook you, as well I might, seeing your dress, for one of them. If I had mortally wounded you, and then found out my mistake, it would have made me miserable.'

"I easily perceived by his manner and tone that the stranger was decidedly a gentleman. I begged to apologise, stating that my family had suffered in France during the worst days of the

Revolution; that I had been imprisoned, and afterwards forced to serve on board a man-of-war, but, was determined not to fight against my countrymen, and that the moment I landed with the party attacking the town, I fled.

"'Cursed set of cowardly Buccaneers!' said the stranger. 'Come, I am rejoiced, since you are an Englishman and no harm has happened, that I can give you shelter. Come here, Cherry, my girl,' turning to the two timid but really lovely girls, that stood gazing at me with surprise. One of the girls came timidly forward, and then her father, for such the stranger was, said: 'Do you think we may trust this young man, and let him share our shelter; he's an Englishman, though somewhat like one of those Buccaneering Frenchmen in attire.'

"The young girl blushed, saying: 'Oh, yes, father, I should surely do so. What else but to seek safety could bring him here?'

"'Thank you, Miss,' said I, 'for your good opinion; I assure you, you shall never repent any kindness shewn me. I have hitherto suffered

from tyranny and oppression, but kindness I have rarely experienced.'

"'Well, girls, he shall have my protection, though those cursed Frenchmen have knocked down our house, and left us only the canopy of heaven for a roof, besides we must get out of this place before night, or some hungry lion may possibly intrude. So come, sit down; I do not think there is the slightest chance of the enemy penetrating further than the town, so you are safe enough. I see clearly you are, or were, in a better station of life than your dress denotes. You will have time enough to tell me all about yourself. I have an intelligent negro watching the movements of the French; when he comes back and reports that they have returned on board their ship, we will think of moving.' So we all seated ourselves on the dried grass in heaps, gathered by the two black attendants. These two natives were far from ugly, though certainly not provided with a superfluity of garments.

"'Now girls,' said the stranger, 'let us have some refreshment and wine,' and at once a large

hamper was unpacked. The stranger's two daughters, losing their timidity, laughingly displayed their stores, and most kindly invited me to share their repast. We were in a nice cool, shady place, well protected from the sun's rays, otherwise the heat would have been oppressive. Some roast fowls and bread, and fruit, and good wine, made an excellent repast, and before it was finished I had become quite friendly and familiar with the two charming sisters and their kind-hearted father. The young ladies were attired in loose cotton dresses, simply drawn in at the waist, and wore rice straw hats. Their father was a man rather above the middle size, broad shouldered, and deep chested, with very handsome, pleasing features, dark hair and beard, and in years about forty-five. His two daughters were, as he afterwards told me, seventeen and fifteen. The eldest was a lovely girl, and so fair, I judged she could not have been long exposed to a southern sun. The negro girls were very young, with slender, fine forms, and dazzling white teeth; of their dress, the less said the better—it was the

attire of the country, and no one thought anything about it."

A summons on deck, a large ship being in sight, put an end to Julian Arden's story for that night, and all went upon deck.

CHAPTER XII.

On gaining the deck all eyes were turned in the direction of the strange ship. It was a clear fine night, and the wind and sea moderate.

"Ah, that's a merchant ship," said Captain O'Loughlin, looking through his night glass. "I am sure of it. What has brought her so close in with the French coast? It's a great and unnecessary risk."

The stranger was soon within hailing distance. The "Onyx" altered her course and then ran in a parallel line with the strange vessel; she was a full-rigged ship, under top-gallant sails. The

Lieutenant hailed her, demanding from whence she sailed, and where bound to. They saw at a glance she was an English ship, but she might be in the hands of a prize crew, running for some French port.

A strong, manly voice replied that the vessel was the "Flying Fish," from Jamaica to London. She had been chased by a French frigate until close in with the French coast, where she fell in with three English ships of war. One gave chase to the Frenchman, and she continued her voyage. One of the English vessels hailed her, asking name, &c.; told her she would fall in with the "Onyx," off Havre, and that there was little or no risk of encountering an enemy as she was then steering; the wind was too scant to keep off the land.

Captain O'Loughlin told the Captain he had better get on the other tack, and make the best of his way and sight the English Coast. The "Flying Fish" then put about, and after exchanging compliments, the two ships separated; as did the friends, for the night. Nothing particular occurred the following day, there being

little or no wind, so the party again assembled in the cabin, and Julian Arden resumed his narrative.

"As we sat, or rather reposed on the heaps of soft grass," began Julian Arden, "after finishing our meal, the stranger told me he should like to know something about me; how I came to be mixed up in the French Revolution, and what I intended doing with myself in such a pestiferous climate as Sierra Leone. I merely told him my father was an English gentleman of the name of Arden, and that my mother, sometime after his death, was, in a certain measure, forced to marry the Duke de Coulancourt; and then I briefly related how I lost my poor mother and sister, and my own sufferings in prison. I saw the tears in the eyes of the two young girls, and felt flattered by the kind commiseration of both father and daughters.

"'Well, young gentleman,' said the Englishman, 'I think the best thing, and indeed the only thing you can do, is to get a passage in the first ship that touches here for England; arrived there

you will easily discover your relatives. Now I will tell you who I am, and what my intentions are, for I am not a resident here I assure you of my own free will. My name is Packenham, I am colonel of the —— Regiment. We were returning to England from the Cape, when we were sighted and chased by a remarkably fast privateer under the tri-color. Our ship was a new vessel, with a stout hearted skipper and a brave crew; and after an action, sharp, and of long endurance, we beat the fellow off; but he so cut up our sails and rigging and damaged our spars, that in a succession of gales some days after we were close driven towards the coast of Africa, and in a tremendous squall lost our foremast, and finally went ashore two leagues to the eastward of the new town. Fortunately our ship was a strong one; she held together for two days, and we all, captain and crew, got safely on shore. But scarcely had we secured our baggage and effects before another hurricane from a worse point knocked the vessel all to pieces. We proceeded to the town, and strange enough I found settled

there a very old friend and brother in arms, a Captain Stanhope, who had been induced to come out here by the Sierra Leone Company. He had a wife and eight children, and hoped to support them on his half pay and the stipend allowed him by the company. He is now with his two fine boys and four girls, all that's left, up at Fort Banca, which we must endeavour to reach to-night. Our unfortunate skipper and his crew sailed in a miserably small schooner with what was saved from the wreck, about three weeks after our misfortune. I would not venture my children in her, so my friend Stanhope got me a house and these two comely young negresses to attend on us, and I hired a negro, and here we have been waiting the arrival of some merchant ship from England, or a man of war, but not one has touched here since; and now these confounded Sans Culottes have knocked down our house and driven us into the woods. The best thing you can do is to return to England with us. I will do my best to supply your wants, having luckily saved all my own effects, for the moment we

perceived these French ships we all sent off our effects to Fort Banca; of course, we could offer no resistance.'

"I returned Colonel Packenham my most sincere thanks for his generous intentions. As the day wore on, we became anxious to know whether the French had returned to their ships. I offered to go and endeavour to discover, but one of the black attendants who was on the look out came running into our retreat, saying:

"'Massa! Massa! Pompey, he come!'

"In a few minutes a fine able bodied negro made his appearance; he was startled at seeing me in the attire of a French sailor, but the Colonel told him that it was all right, that I was an Englishman.

"'Ah! see him berry glad, massa,' continued Pompey. 'De debils be all gone bord ship. De burn and carry off ebery ting, cuss 'em. De sure come again to-morrow.'

"'Well then, Pompey, we must set out at once for Banca, we shall find canoes on the river bank.'

"'Certain sure, massa. Massa Stanhope ab dem ready for you.'

"'Well, then,' continued the Colonel, 'pack up our traps and let us be moving, it's only two miles to the river. Banca, young gentleman, is a fort on an island up the river.'

"I helped the young ladies to get all the little chattels, they had brought away hastily from their house in the town, and insisted on taking my share of the burdens. The negro girls laughed and chatted as if the whole affair was a piece of amusement, and off we started. It was not so very easy to get through the entangled wood; the Colonel and Pompey led the way, whilst I assisted the daughters, cutting away the brambles and overhanging branches with an axe Pompey gave me. Having cleared the wood we soon got over the rice grounds, and in an hour we reached the banks of the river. There we found two large canoes, with some negroes belonging to Captain Stanhope. We all embarked and were paddled up the river, with

the tide in our favour, for the island on which Fort Banca stood.

"'I could scarcely suppose,' I remarked to Miss Cherry Packenham, who sat next to me in the canoe, 'that this part of the world had a climate so destructive to human life, the scenery is so beautiful. This is a fine open view, and the air, though hot, not overpoweringly so.'

"'Ah! you will be deceived by all you see,' said the young girl; 'this is rather a favourable month, and this year has altogether been less fatal to human life. There is Fort Banca. I hope those horrid French ships will not attempt to come up the river, and fire upon the fort.'

"'It looks very strong,' I observed, 'and, from its position, difficult of attack.'

"'Papa says it's all outward show; for if an enemy gets up the river, they would soon knock it to pieces.'

"Just as it began to grow dusk, we reached the landing place at Fort Banca. Colonel Packenham's friend, Captain Stanhope, was waiting to receive him.

"'In the name of fate,' said the Captain, shaking his friend the Colonel by the hand, 'why did you not come up the river in the boats, instead of taking to the woods—the jungle is dangerous.'

"'Faith, I thought my two little girls would have a worse chance if the enemy opened fire on the boats,' returned the Colonel, 'and I was so anxious for them that I started on the first opening of the fire from the French ships. Cowardly rascals, to fire into the streets of the town, and our flag hauled down.'

"'Well, here you are, safe and sound,' said the Captain, looking at me with surprise; 'but who is this young man—a French prisoner?'

"'Not exactly; an Englishman under false colours.'

"The Colonel then introduced me to his friend, who very kindly welcomed me. We were all made very comfortable. I was located with the Colonel's family, and for a few days we enjoyed quietness and peace. I was in dangerous company, for Miss Packenham had every

quality besides beauty to engage the affections of our sex. Captain Stanhope's daughters were exceedingly agreeable and pretty; and altogether, life would have been exceedingly agreeable in Fort Banca, had not there been several deaths, owing to the crowded state of the fort. We were not long, however, left in fancied security.

"One morning the alarm was sounded; the topsails of a large ship were seen ascending the river, and very soon it was ascertained, by the arrival of a canoe, that the French frigate, the 'Felicité,' and my old ship, were coming up to attack the fort. All who could carry arms were called to aid in the defence. I gladly offered myself, and was enrolled amongst the defenders of the fort. The two frigates, having taken up a position, at once opened fire upon us, to which we replied with spirit. I felt most anxious to give my old tyrant as large a dose of shot as I could, and the second day, for some reason or other, he dropped behind the 'Felicité.' We learned afterwards my old Captain had been mortally wounded by a splinter, and died the following

day; but the first Lieutenant having the command, the frigate was brought into place again, and commenced a determined and fierce fire against us. We had several killed, numbers wounded, and two of our best guns dismounted, besides our walls knocked about our ears. The enemy gave us no peace, night or day. At length, nearly worn out, our ammunition almost exhausted, and half our little garrison *hors de combat*, it was agreed, after a long consultation, to abandon the fort. The inhabitants of the town, therefore, began removing their effects in canoes and boats, intending to go up the river to a negro settlement, till the French fleet sailed. To deceive the enemy we kept up the best cannonading we could, though, in truth, the walls were nearly in ruins. The departure of the inhabitants from the town and fort could not be seen from the ships, for the island and sudden curve of the river completely concealed our movements.

"I must now mention a circumstance I failed to do before. Amongst the persons who took

refuge in the fort was an English settler, calling himself John Sinclair; he said he was of good family, from Hampshire, was about eight and twenty, tall, rather well-looking, and strong and active. Still, you could not call him a gentleman. He possessed a considerable sum of money when he arrived from England, with which he purchased land and negroes, male and female. For two years he led a wild, irregular life; was said to have committed some very bad acts, in fact, he began to be shunned and feared; but, all of a sudden, he sold his land, purchased a house in the new town, kept five or six negroes, and set up a kind of store, and, up to the arrival of Colonel Packenham, lived tolerably quiet. It seems he saw the Colonel's eldest daughter, and openly declared his admiration of her, and became so marked in his endeavours to intrude himself on Miss Packenham's presence, that the Colonel got angry, and some harsh words ensued; after this John Sinclair kept quiet. He was in the fort when we arrived, and made himself useful, avoided offending the

Colonel, but seemed to take a positive dislike to me, and one day had the impudence to tell me I was half a Frenchman. It was no time to quarrel, therefore I merely replied I would take an opportunity to convince him I was entirely an Englishman. The increasing dangers of the siege so occupied us all that I thought little about John Sinclair. I passed all my spare time in the company of the Colonel's daughters, and every day increased the feeling of affection I experienced for Cherry Packenham.

"When the garrison had resolved that the townspeople and all the females should leave, the Colonel was persuaded to leave also with his daughters, for we were only going to keep up a mock defence of the place, to give the inhabitants time to get some miles up the river out of all fear of pursuit. I saw my kind friends off, and that the two girls and their two black attendants were in a good rowing-boat, and bade them farewell for a couple of days. To my surprise, I observed John Sinclair leave in a fast-boat, with his four negroes pulling. I did not dwell long on

the circumstance, but in the evening I happened to hear his name mentioned by Captain Stanhope. 'He left in his boat this morning,' said I.

"'Yes,' returned the Captain, 'but he said he should be back to-night; he is a bad fellow; I have my suspicions that some years of his life he has either been a pirate, or a slave dealer; and there's something mysterious now in his movements.'

"'The next day we perceived the 'Felicité' warping nearer to us, so we prepared for our departure as the Fort would be demolished in a few hours. Leaving the British colours flying after discharging our three cannons, the only guns fit for service, at the frigate, we embarked in two six-paddle canoes, Captain Stanhope, his two sons, myself, and six soldiers in one, and Lieutenant Markham, a sergeant, and eight men in the other. As we pulled up the river with the flood-tide, we heard a tremendous fire opened upon the old crumbling walls of the Fort, and then suddenly cease. 'Ah!' said Captain Stanhope, 'they have found out that

the birds are gone.' We pulled on till the tide turned, and anchored for the night in a little creek, erected two tents we had brought with us, and made ourselves comfortable till the turn of the tide.

"'This would be a bad adventure a month later,' said Captain Stanhope as we rested, the Captain and Lieutenant smoking their pipes. I had not imbibed that taste, so sat enjoying a bottle of good wine, and thinking of Cherry Packenham. I asked 'why?' 'Because,' said the Captain, 'some of us would be sure to catch the fever, for where we are going the country is scarcely cleared, and the jungles are pestiferous.'

"'How far up have our friends gone?' I demanded.

"'Perhaps not more than two, or three leagues; there is a deserted village, and plenty of huts which will afford shelter till those infernal Frenchmen take themselves off. I am sure, having no chance of plunder, they will be away from this coast in a few days. We shall then return to the town, and repair the damage.'

"The next morning early we took down our tents, packed up, and started with the first of the flood. This was a suffocatingly hot day, the river on both sides covered with an impenetrable jungle. About three o'clock we came in sight of the clearance, where the huts were; we saw the canoes all at anchor before the place, and numbers of the inhabitants crowding down to the river's bank. 'There is something wrong,' said Captain Stanhope, and we paddled rapidly up. I felt, even then, I could not say why, unaccountably uneasy. As soon as we reached the banks, several persons met us, all eager to speak.

"'What's the matter? What's the matter?' said Captain Stanhope.

"'We have bad news to tell you, Captain,' said a gentleman of the name of Creigh, an Irish settler—'John Sinclair carried off, in the night, Colonel Packenham's two daughters, and the two negro girls.'

"'Good God!' I exclaimed, jumping ashore in an agony of mind indescribable. 'Has no one pursued them? Which way did they go?

Who helped this villain to commit such an outrage?'

"'We can't say,' said several by-standers; 'the Colonel slept in one of the huts, with his daughters, their female attendants, and the negro Pompey. In the morning the Colonel was found gagged and bound lying on the floor of the hut, and not a soul else was to be seen. All the Colonel could say was, that in his sleep he was seized, a blanket forcibly held over his face and head to stifle his shouts; he was then gagged and bound, and the blanket left round his head; had he not received assistance he would have been shortly suffocated; he is very ill!'

"' Who has gone after the ruffians?' demanded Captain Stanhope, boiling with rage.

"No one as yet,' returned several persons, together. 'Most of the men have gone across the country to —— to see for provisions; all here are mostly women and children; we waited till you came up with the men.'

"'I requested to be shewn where the Colonel was, whilst Captain Stanhope picked out half-a-

dozen active men and three, or four active guides. The Captain could not go himself for he was lame, but his two sons promised to accompany me, in the steamer. It was well known that they must have been carried off in Sinclair's boat, for it was gone. In a most agitated state of mind, I ran to the hut where the Colonel was, and entering, found him in a high fever and quite delirious. The only medical man we had was with him; nor could learn nothing from his ravings; it was no use waiting, so in less than two hours we were ready to start, well armed for pursuit. Captain Stanhope's two sons, Lieutenant Dobbs, and four of his men, and myself, with four good negro guides, formed the party in pursuit; each carried six rounds of ball cartridge, and provisions for four days. The provision was very simple, consisting of merely biscuit, cheese, and gourds full of rum. We could shoot plenty of game for food if required. It was surmised by Captain Stanhope that Sinclair would go no further up the river than —— ——, he might then carry their boat over a track of land to a lake about

two miles from the river's brink. This lake was above twenty miles long, and from it ran a river communicating with the sea. At the mouth of this river was a negro village, and sometimes vessels touched at this place. It had been suspected latterly that Sinclair had associates on the coast, who had a vessel somewhere; at all events we could easily see if the boat had been carried over land or abandoned, for the tide went no higher up the river, and the current without the tide was too fierce to stem.

"Accordingly we started in our long light canoe, easy of carriage, and proceeded up the river, through a wild and entangled country, clothed with wood and jungle to the very water's edge, and full of wild beasts. It was very evident no landing could be effected on either shore, except at great risks, and quite impossible to force females through. At length we came to the end of the tide, and to the spot indicated. Our negroes at once pointed to the cleared space, and on grounding our canoe, we at once saw the tracks of many feet, also the marks of hauling a

boat up the sloping bank. It was too late to cross to the lake that day, so the canoe was hauled up, a tent rapidly constructed of branches of trees, and a quantity of matting, brought for that special purpose.

"With the earliest dawn we commenced our way to the lake, dragging our canoe over a narrow slip of swampy country, the track of the other boat and the marks of many feet could also be seen, and amongst them those of the feet of the two black girls, but no trace of the feet of the two Misses Packenham, so we conjectured they had been carried in the boat. It was a dead level, and no doubt at times was overflowed by either the waters of the lake or the river. About noon we reached the borders of as dismal and gloomy a lake as could be imagined; the shores being covered with low entangled masses of vegetation. No trees or high land on either side, the water black, and a hot breeze swept over its surface; there were no islands, and its length appeared about twenty miles, by three and

sometimes five miles in breadth. From where we were no river could be seen running into it, and yet it must be fed by either streams or springs, for the negroes said where it ran into the sea the stream was broad and rapid, but before reaching the sea it dwindled away into the several small unnavigable streams, running through dangerous sands, bordering a safe kind of creek where small vessels often anchored, and where slaves were often shipped. They also said that the people were very wild and bad, and would seize and sell any one they could get for slaves.

"As we launched our canoe, the wind began to blow with great violence from the sea; we were just at the end of the rainy season. The last week in October the rains were over, but sudden gales and squalls were frequent. By keeping close in with the western shore we were enabled to traverse the lake, but the twenty miles took us till dark, so we were forced to pull our canoe upon a bank, and make the best shelter we could for the night, amidst a frightful storm of rain,

thunder, and lightning. The next morning it cleared, but blew tremendously in from the sea. We resolved to leave our boat, and make for the negro village on foot across a sandy waste. I was standing on the summit of a small hillock of sand, gazing in the direction of the negro village, when I saw a man coming across one of the streams that ran through the sands towards me. I soon discovered he was a negro with a bandage round his head; he had no clothing except his waist cloth; to my intense joy as he came nearer I recognised Pompey, Colonel Packenham's faithful negro. He recognised me before I knew him, and the poor fellow's joy was great; his head and hair were matted with blood. Some of our party soon joined us. Pompey in his own way gave the account of their seizure. He said he was sleeping, covered with a piece of matting, outside his master's hut, and the first thing that woke him was a blow on the head with a piece of wood, but as he strove to get up, a negro, he saw him plain enough, struck him senseless with a hatchet, in fact the poor fellow had a frightful

gash in his head; when he recovered he found himself in a large boat, full of negroes and three white men, with the Miss Packenhams crying bitterly in each other's arms, and their two black servants. When he attempted to move, the negroes rowing the boat kicked and beat him, so he lay still. When they arrived at the halting place, they stripped him, gave him a cloth and an old piece of canvass to tie over the bleeding cut in his head, and then dragged the boat over the land with the two young girls in her; all the rest had to walk. Pompey was made to assist in dragging the boat; then they passed down the lake, and got, by pulling the boat through the shallows, into the creek before the negro town. There was a fine schooner at anchor before the village, and on board this vessel they carried the distracted girls, and thrust Pompey into the hold, which was fitted up for two hundred slaves; of which there were one hundred and thirty on board. It was a Spanish vessel and carried twelve hands; sixty or seventy slaves remained to ship, but, the heavy gale and neglecting proper pre-

cautions, she went ashore from the force of the wind, though there was no sea; in the confusion Pompey made his escape, with several other slaves; but they separated before Pompey fell in with us.

"We all now assembled and consulted as to how we should proceed. We were ten well-armed men; the storm had wonderfully befriended us, for it was very certain had the schooner remained afloat, it would by this time have been at sea, and the unfortunate girls lost. It was horrible to think what might be their fate. As I said, we were ten in all, well-armed and determined men. We thought it probable that we should have to contend with the crew of the schooner, and John Sinclair and his associates; but if we could get at the place where the slaves were confined, for when the schooner stranded they were taken out of her and confined in the great sheds erected for the purpose of holding them till ready to be embarked, by giving them freedom we should greatly embarrass our enemies. So being resolved, and ready to set out, we fol-

lowed Pompey, who undertook to take us round the base of the hill, so that we should not be perceived till ready to make a rush upon the sheds. I asked Pompey where he thought the two young ladies were confined? He said he was sure they were in the cabin of the schooner. She was, though ashore, nearly upright, but they could not get her off before the next rise in the tide, and that would not be for four days.

"After an hour's walking and wading, we got safely to the back of the hills, sheltering the cove and the slave station, and then by a rugged path, well known to Pompey—for he himself had once been a prisoner there and about to be shipped when he escaped—we came nearly in view of the station, when our ears were saluted by the reports of muskets, the shouts, cries, and fierce yells of negroes, and rushing forward we beheld below us a scene of indescribable contention. Some two or three hundred negroes were furiously attacking a number of white men, who tried to save themselves behind the huts, firing and killing many of the negroes. With the white men

were a number of blacks fighting on their side. Lying on the beach was the schooner, and on her decks were several men trying to bring the two eight-pounders she had on board to bear upon the liberated slaves, of whom a large party were carrying combustibles to fire the schooner, which lay high and dry.

"'Good God!' I exclaimed, 'we have no time to lose; the blacks will fire the schooner; let us make for the vessel.'

"We rushed down the hill, and in five minutes were in the midst of the conflict. Ten or twelve blacks and three whites lay stark and stiff on the ground.

"Pompey kept screaming to his countrymen that we were not come against them, but against Sinclair and the people of the schooner.

"The blacks raised a tremendous yell, and made a rush upon Sinclair and five white men, who were defending a large shed; but John Sinclair and his men saw us at once, and levelled their muskets at us as we advanced, wounding two of our party slightly. They then,

cutlass and pistol in hand, made for the schooner, just as the crew, having brought the bow gun to act, fired it loaded with grape amongst the infuriated slaves, killing several and wounding numbers. This only exasperated them ten-fold. I was the youngest and fastest on foot of our little band, and, with a cutlass and pistol, I rushed after John Sinclair, to cut him off before he could get into the schooner. His five companions were some yards ahead—most anxious to reach the vessel, knowing they could make a desperate fight of it from her deck; I came within a yard of him, and, in my bitterness of feeling, I could have shot him, but I did not. He heard me calling on him, and, turning, deliberately fired his pistol, with a frightful curse, within a foot of my face. The ball merely raised the skin of my cheek, and then I made a cut at him with my cutlass, but he was a strong, powerful, man—he knocked up the weapon, and made a cut at me, but slipped and stumbled. The next instant three or four negroes threw themselves, with yells horrible to hear, upon the man, and

casting him upon the beach, despite all I could do, beat his brains out with hatchets; but the same instant the gun from the schooner was levelled at them, and stretched many of them, bleeding and wounded, beside their victim. A body of more than one hundred and fifty negroes now rushed frantically at the schooner, our party, excepting a few wounds and bruises, were all right, and Lieutenant Dobbs called out to those on the schooner's deck to surrender, and give up the two young ladies on board and their attendants, or the blacks would fire the vessel and murder them. Their reply was a volley of oaths and pistol shots. So we swung ourselves up by the ropes from the bowsprit, the blacks following, yelling with fury; but the nine men on board did not stop to resist us—they swung down over the quarters and made a rush for their boat, launched her, and pulled out into the bay. The schooner was gained by the maddened negroes, who commenced ransacking every part of her for spirits, and, having hauled up a cask, they broke in the head, and, with the

yells and shouts of demons, commenced a negro orgie.

"Whilst this was going on, Lieutenant Dobbs and I broke open the cabin door, which was locked and a bar placed across it. A cry of despair came from the cabin; I rushed in, and, with inexpressible delight, beheld the two sisters locked in each other's arms, and the two horrified black girls on their knees beside them. But a faint light entered the cabin from bulls' eyes on the deck, the skylight having been covered over. At first the two girls, who were paralysed by the firing and the hideous uproar above, did not recognise us as deliverers, but the sound of my voice re-assured them. Starting up, they threw themselves into my arms, and embraced me as a brother, with hysterical emotion, and bursting into a flood of tears.

"Pompey came rushing into the cabin, saying: 'Massa, massa, be quick! de fire de ship, and turn debbles wid drink; de turn and kill us, may be!' The men above called out also to

be quick, for the negroes were raving mad, and had set fire to the fore-cabin of the schooner.

"Having assured the terrified girls that their father was alive and quite safe—I did not like to say he was in a fever—we hurried on deck. It was a scene of horror! The negroes had drunk the spirits as if it were water; some howling and yelling and leaping about the deck, others lying about stupified. Flames were coming up from the fore-cabin, and a set of drunken negroes were dancing around it, hand in hand, screaming and yelling.

"'We must be off this instant,' said Henry Stanhope; 'they will surely turn upon us, if only one black rascal gives the signal. We have ropes ready to lower the females over the side.'

"In a few minutes the men flung themselves over the side, whilst Lieutenant Dobbs and I lowered the almost fainting girls, when, as Henry Stanhope expected, two or three of the drunken wretches cried out, 'Let us kill the whites; don't let them have the women.' This

was in their own language, which of course I did not understand, but Pompey, in his way, told us what they said. However, we all got out of the schooner safely—her foremast, rigging, and sails a sheet of flame. The negroes, all that could, threw themselves pell-mell over the side, for it was getting too hot for them, whilst we, supporting and partly carrying the poor girls, hurried from the place, avoiding the huts, and making the best of our way to our boat, which we reached at night-fall, thanking God that we had so fortunately succeeded in rescuing the Miss Packenhams, and escaped from the drunken fury of the liberated slaves."

CHAPTER XIII.

JULIAN ARDEN was unable to continue his narrative, for the corvette had approached so close to the French coast as to require all her Commander's attention to their situation. The "Onyx" was hove to till day-break, and during the night was disguised as much as possible so as to resemble a French vessel of war. Towards morning the tricolour was hoisted, and the vessel turned her head seaward. They were then about three leagues to the eastward of Havre. It became a fine, clear day, and before noon they beheld a fine French brig, running for the port of Havre.

The Captain evidently mistook the "Onyx" for what she was not, for he came unsuspectingly into the jaws of the lion, and, when too late, endeavoured to fly; but the corvette ran alongside and took possession. The brig had a rich cargo, and had, owing to the fog, escaped the several cruisers to the westward, only to become a prize in sight of her destined harbour.

"This is exactly what we wanted," said Captain O'Loughlin to Julian Arden; "this craft will furnish you with cash and garments suited to your purpose, and also with papers. We will select these belonging to a young seaman called Lebeau; I have looked them over. He is second mate of this brig; about your age and height. I have ordered a suit of his garments to be brought on board. The brig, with a midshipman and eight hands, I will send across channel to Portsmouth, and land her crew some miles down along the coast. I will then put you on shore, with a supply of cash, close to Havre, where you say the Chateau Coulancourt is situated. With your perfect knowledge of

French, you will easily pass through the country without suspicion. I shall cruise on and off this coast till I receive orders to go elsewhere. Now, should circumstances arise that might induce you to return on board, you will recognise this corvette, and any kind of signal, should we happen to be within sight, will cause me to send a boat for you."

Julian Arden warmly thanked the kind hearted O'Loughlin for his attention, and wish to render him service.

"You are the brother of Sir Oscar de Bracy's protegée, that's enough to ensure my services; and if you were not I should still wish to serve you, now that I have the pleasure of knowing you," replied the warm hearted sailor, pressing the young man's hand.

As he was to be landed the following night, Julian Arden resumed his adventures in the evening.

"We all felt relieved and highly elated on regaining our boat; well aware how difficult would have been the enterprise against John Sinclair

and his associates, had not the slaves broken their bondage. The cause of all this bloodshed and fury on the part of the slaves, Pompey told us, was the frightful cruelty practised upon them chiefly by John Sinclair. For the slightest offence they were flogged till they fainted, and the night the schooner stranded several tried to escape along with Pompey. In revenge for this John Sinclair and four of his most hardened associates cruelly flogged and beat the rest, and pinched their flesh with hot pinchers, and other cruelties. One of their number contrived to free his hands, and by the most incredible exertions he freed two more, and then all were untied; and setting up a yell of triumph they broke down the sheds, seized the stakes as weapons, and fell upon their oppressors just at the very moment we happened to arrive. What became of them I know not, the schooner was entirely burned, as well as the negro village. The boat with the seamen put to sea, and were perhaps picked up, or landed further down the coast.

"We made the best shelter we could for the

rescued captives, and the next morning early embarked on the lake, and by nightfall arrived on the banks of the river without accident. The next day we reached the settlement, and were received with shouts of joy and congratulations. Colonel Packenham regained his senses, on the restoration of his beloved children, and four or five days' rest completely restored him; a week afterwards the French ships sailed, and we all returned to the town. The inhabitants commenced at once to repair the damages committed by the French, but unfortunately the fever began to shew itself and to spread fatally. Many were attacked and died. I had a slight seizure, but soon recovered. Miss Packenham had a severe attack, but, thank God, she recovered. One of Captain Stanhope's daughters and poor Henry Stanhope, who so bravely helped to rescue the Miss Packenhams, fell victims. So deeply anxious became the colonel to leave, that a month afterwards we all embarked in a small English brig, that put in from the Cape. She was a slow sailer, and her captain a thorough seaman; but the

fates were against us; to avoid falling in with any of the French cruisers we steered a wide course. After getting a glimpse of the Spanish coast, and just as we were flattering ourselves, and on the eve of sighting the Irish coast, we were chased by a French privateer. Our poor little brig, as I said, sailed like a tub, and on receiving a shot through her mainsail hauled down her colors and backed topsails. The privateer's boats came alongside, put a prize crew on board, but otherwise behaved extremely well; of course all the Colonel's effects and baggage became plunder, but they offered no insult to the ladies and left them in possession of the cabin. Colonel Packenham was permitted to remain in the brig, but the captain, myself, and four of the crew were removed into the privateer. I suppressed any mention of my feelings on this untoward conclusion to our voyage; I could only press poor Cherry's hand, the tears were in her eyes, but her brave noble father cheered us by his example and put faith and trust in a merciful Providence who had hitherto protected us through so many

trials. The next morning a brig under French colours hove in sight. Captain Eltherme, who commanded the "Sans Pareil" privateer, said to me:

"'That's a wolf in a sheep's skin; that's an English brig, and too strong for me.'

"How my heart beat with hope! The privateer hoisted signals, the brig answered by hoisting English colors and firing a gun. The Frenchman cursed and swore against luck, stamped upon deck, but ended by crowding sail and abandoning the prize.

"'Ah!' said Captain Eltherme looking into my face, and seeing, I suppose, my delight at the Colonel and his daughter's escape, though cut to the heart at my own situation; "don't you think he's going to catch me, I have the legs of that confounded brig;' and he had. The privateer ran into the river of Bordeaux, whilst the brig returned, and I dare say retook the English craft.

"My prospects were now dismal in the extreme, I was taken as an Englishman, and might remain years in prison. I might be recognized as Julian

Coulancourt, and then shot as a deserter from the 'Volontaire.'

"'I tell you what, Monsieur,' said Captain Eltherme to me, 'I'm not a bad kind of man for a privateer's-man—*eh, mon garçon?*'

"'Well, no;' I replied, 'I have found you very kind, and you behaved generously to my friends.'

"'*Eh, bien, mon garçon*, listen to me. You speak French too much like a native to be an Englishman, besides you have something of the Frenchman about you.' I did not consider the captain very complimentary, but I let him go on. 'If I send you ashore with the rest, you may remain in prison for years. You speak English like a native.'

"'I am a native,' I exclaimed, rather vexed.

"'*Eh bien!* be it so,' he returned. 'Still you can be useful to me when I capture English vessels; stay with me.'

"'But you do not suppose, Captain Eltherme,' I exclaimed, 'that I am going to fight against my countrymen.'

"'No; *mon Dieu*, no,' said he, 'I do not want you to fight, *parole d' honeur*—but take my advice and do not go to prison. I may be taken in my turn, then you will have your liberty; are you satisfied? You shall share my cabin with my officers, and no one shall insult you.'

"I consented; we shook hands, and the 'Sans Pareil,' after landing poor Captain Botten and his four men at the fort, put to sea. On board the 'Sans Pareil' I remained fourteen months. She took several valuable prizes and returned to Bordeaux, and as I gave my word not to attempt to escape I went ashore with him. I did him, and my countrymen taken in the prizes, good service; I saved several from captivity, and during the month we remained in Bordeaux I was received into the Captain's family and treated with the greatest kindness. I told him after some months, finding him a true hearted kind man, who I really was, and how I was connected with one of the first families in France. We again put to sea. You may be sure, though I really wished no misfortune to

occur to my worthy skipper, I still looked forward to a change of fortune. The 'Sans Pareil' was a splendid sailing vessel, and nearly two hundred and fifty tons burden, with a fine crew, but her career was drawing to a close. We left Bordeaux for a cruise in the channel; we were but three days out when we encountered one of the most tremendous gales, the Captain said, he had ever witnessed. Every sail we attempted to set was blown into ribbons, whilst a tremendous sea cleared our decks of boats and every inch of bulwark. Our rigging snapped like whipcord, and finally our main mast went over the side, carrying with it three of the crew; so we drove up channel under our foremast without a rag on it The sea was awful to look at, and the weather so thick that we expected each moment, ignorant of where we were, to run ashore. At length under a deluge of rain the wind shifted to the nor'-west, and at break of day the sky suddenly cleared, and to the Captain's consternation we found ourselves within gunshot of an English frigate under storm staysails. English colors

were shewn on our foremast, but the 'Sans Pareil' was well known, and considered too great a pest to be spared, and the ship as we shot close by, lifted on a huge billow, hailed through a speaking trumpet, ordering us to heave to or she would sink us. Captain Eltherme, even in that tremendous sea, sought to escape, and with great bravery—for heave to he could not—lowered the English flag and hoisted the tri-color. He imagined in that boiling sea the English frigate would never open fire, but she did; the iron shower passed over without injury to us, but another, as the frigate paid off, gave us our death wound, the shot going into our side as we rolled over on a cross sea. Some accident evidently happened to the frigate, for instead of following us she again bore up in the wind, whilst we contrived to set a stay sail on the foremast, and then bore away for the French coast; but we soon found that the pumps would not keep the vessel free, neither could the carpenters plug the shot hole in the breaking seas. Just as the sun was setting, and we were fast

settling in the water, we came up with the French frigate 'Prudente' lying to. Signals of distress were hoisted, and as we passed under her stern we stated we were sinking. With immense difficulty and by almost incredible exertions, with hawsers and barrels, for no boat could live, we were all taken out except nine, who went down with the unfortunate 'Sans Pareil.' It was five days after this that the 'Prudente' was encountered by you, Captain O'Loughlin. Determined to be free or perish I rushed up the rigging, and, thank God! succeeded in reaching this ship in safety. I have now brought, I fear my tedious narrative, to which you have listened with patience, to a close."

"Well, by Jove, my dear young friend, you have had your share of trials for one so young. Your narrative has greatly interested me, and now that you have finished, I will give you some intelligence that will, I know, gratify you. When the 'Vengeance' foundered, on the first of June, in the engagement with Lord Howe's fleet, the

English boats saved many lives. Captain Renaudin was picked up by one boat, and his gallant little son by another. Each thought the other lost, when, to their intense joy, they again met in Portsmouth."

"How rejoiced I am to hear this intelligence," said Julian Arden, "for a nobler or braver spirit never breathed than Captain Renaudin."

"He has been done justice to, I assure you. Our papers of that time gave the full particulars of the foundering of the 'Vengeance,' and of the father and son's reunion. The next piece of news I have to tell you is, that not very long ago I saw an article in the *Times* newspaper, announcing the appointment of a Lieutenant-General Packenham, to the command of the garrison at Plymouth, mentioning the gallant services of the General whilst in India. I have no doubt but that this Lieutenant-General Packenham, is the same Colonel Packenham you knew."

"I dare say it is," returned Julian, "and I trust time has not obliterated from Miss Packen-

ham's mind all memory of my unfortunate self."

"Say fortunate, my dear young friend, for you have been providentially saved during severe trials. Do not, like most lovers, absent from their charmers, give way to imaginary evils. 'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.'"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE following day Julian Arden, attired in the garments of the French seaman, Louis Lebeau, and furnished with his papers, and a good sum in French money, took leave of his kind friends on board the "Onyx," was landed in the dusk on the French coast, actually within half a mile of the spot where the lugger, the "Vengeance," had been run ashore by William Thornton, and his follower, Bill Saunders. Julian felt himself perfectly secure in his character of a French seaman; but he felt also, greatly anxious to discover the fate of his dear mother; whether she

still enjoyed freedom, or was under the surveillance of the Republic. Though he had no doubt when daylight broke, that he should recognise from memory many of the features of the surrounding country, still, in the dark, he was loth to commence his journey to Coulancourt.

It was the month of June, so there was very little hardship in passing the night under the shelter of one of the sand hills. Stretching himself at his ease, he lay ruminating over the past, and picturing to himself prospects for the future. He had many visions, during his uneasy sleep, but Cherry Packenham was the predominating one.

Julian remained quiet till about six in the morning; he then gave himself a shake, bathed his face in an adjacent pool, and mounting a sand hill, cast a glance over the country before him. Like William Thornton, he was at once attracted by the village spire, and the creek, losing itself amongst the sand hills.

"Ah!" said Julian, joyfully, "I remember yonder village; that's where good Dame Moret

lived. She was so fond of me when a boy; when I used to play and romp with her daughters. My good old stepfather, the Duke, was alive then," soliloquised Julian; "the axe of the guillotine ended his days."

Then he recollected the grief and agony of his mother.

Descending the hill, he resolved to proceed to the village, to the house of Dame Moret, have a look at the Chateau Coulancourt, and afterwards be guided by circumstances.

Acting upon this resolve, he crossed the country towards the creek; but coming upon a road, where he lost sight of the village, which lay in a thickly wooded district, he altered his course and followed the road to the right, and presently met a cart laden with ropes, blocks, sails, and all kinds of seafaring requisites; three or four sailors were walking alongside the cart, which was drawn by three horses, harnessed with ropes. One of the men, a broad muscular man, better dressed than the others, and in manner and bearing like the

Captain of a ship, was walking in front. He stopped as Julian came up, and looking at him, said:—

"Well, my hearty, where do you hail from, coming this road; or were you seeking me where I am repairing the 'Vengeance?'"

Julian gave a slight start, at the name of the "Vengeance," saying to himself:—

"Then ten to one, this is the skipper of the privateer that Captain O'Loughlin mentioned, as having caused the imprisonment of Sir Sidney Smith and Sir Oscar De Bracy."

This reflection did not require a second's delay in answering the privateer's man, who in reality was the captain of the "Vengeance."

"I hail from Rouen, messmate," replied Julian, quite unconcernedly, and imitating, which he could do with ease, the manner and language of a seaman. "I have heard of the 'Vengeance,' but I was not seeking you. I am going on to the village, and then to Havre, to get a passage to Rouen."

"*Diable!*" said the Captain, "you are out of

your course; how did you get upon this part of the coast?"

"I was landed by my own desire," returned Julian, "from the brig 'Sybille,' from Bourdeaux to Hamburgh. The captain and I could not agree, so we parted; he put me ashore close by here. How far is it to Havre?"

"Well, some two leagues," answered the Captain, "but I tell you what; you had better join my craft. She will be all right in less than a month; I am in want of hands, and as the 'Vengeance' is known to be one of the fastest, and most successful privateers out of any French port, you cannot do better."

"In a month," observed Julian, appearing to think; "yes, that would suit me well enough. I don't like the merchant service, and was thinking of serving the Republic, by entering one of their ships of war."

"Don't be such a *sacre* fool," said the Captain; "take my word for it, no life like a privateer's man."

"Well, where shall I hear of you, if I make up my mind before the month's out?" enquired Julian.

"My craft is repairing at the mouth of the creek," returned the Privateer's man, "about a mile from here; do you intend stopping at the village yonder?"

"Yes, for an hour or two."

"Well, then, ask for Dame Moret; she's my wife's mother. She'll give you a good breakfast, and a glass of good eau-de-vie, and if you will join me within the month, seek me there; you'll hear of me; I like young, active fellows like you. Stay, what's your name?"

"Louis Lebeau."

"Ah! very good; heave ahead, my lads," said the Captain to the men, who stood leaning against the cart, smoking their pipes and listening.

Julian pursued his course. "So," thought he, soliloquising, "the 'Vengeance' has met with some accident since her attempted capture. If

Captain O'Loughlin knew she was repairing within this creek he would assuredly land and burn her."

He walked on, passing several persons, who paid no attention to him further than the usual "bon jour," and entered the village, memory returning at the sight of some familiar object, and proceeding direct towards Dame Moret's farm-house. Three or four women were busily occupied in various ways in the large yard before the dwelling house; groups of turkeys, with "Maitre Jacques" at their heard, were gabbling incessantly, answered in anything but harmonious tones by a flock of geese, whilst whole flocks of pigeons kept flitting about.

"Can I see Dame Moret?" asked Julian Arden to pretty Rose Moret, who just then came out of the house with a pail in her hand.

Rose looked up at the speaker, though she could scarcely have remembered the curly-haired and handsome boy of twelve years old, for she was then only eight years old herself; but she looked with something of surprise in her manner into

the young man's bronzed and handsome face, as she replied:

"Oui, Monsieur; come in, and you will see my mother."

"Can this be little Rose Moret?" said Julian, unintentionally half-aloud, as he gazed with earnest and almost watery eyes into the very pretty features of the maiden.

Rose Moret heard the words; she coloured to the temples, as she started back; but Julian, with a smile, passed the surprised girl, and entered the lofty and wide kitchen.

Dame Moret turned round, with a large tureen in her hand, and looked up into the stranger's face. The Dame seemed also surprised, but she merely said:

"Well, Monsieur, what can I do for you?"

"Your son-in-law, Dame, whom I met half-an-hour or so ago, requested me to call here; he wishes me to join his craft."

"Ah!" said the Dame, with a serious and changed expression of countenance; "then take an old woman's advice, be an honest sea-

man and leave privateering alone. Your face and your voice, young man, raise strange thoughts of the past in my mind. What is your name, and where do you come from?"

Julian looked round; the Dame and he were alone, for the servant girl had followed Rose from the kitchen.

"My name, Dame," said Julian, in a low voice; "does no recollection of Julian Arden"—

"Ah! mon Dieu! mon Dieu!" exclaimed the old woman, clasping her hands, and thereby letting the tureen drop to the floor, where it was shattered to pieces; and then, throwing her arms round his neck, she kissed him, as she often had done before, with all the warm affection of a mother.

"Ah, Dame Moret! Dame Moret!" said Julian, looking affectionately at his old nurse, "how vividly the past comes through the brain; it seems as yesterday that I stood here, and romped through the dear old building with your three girls."

"Hush! some one is coming," said Dame Moret.

"Recollect—I am Louis Lebeau, of Rouen, a sailor."

He had hardly time to say more, when the clank of a steel sheath holding a sword struck against the pavement without, and the next instant two gendarmes, with their cocked hats, entered the kitchen.

Dame Moret was stooping down, carefully picking up the fragments of the unfortunate soup-tureen, whilst Julian, carelessly whistling an air, took a short pipe from his pocket, and walked to the fire to light it.

"You have had a smash, Dame Moret," said one of the men.

"Yes, misfortunes will happen, Monsieur François Perrin," said the Dame; "what has brought you to Caux to-day—anything new?"

"No, Dame, only my customary visit, you know, to the chateau. Monsieur Plessis and family are arrived, and he has a friend with him, we understand, a Monsieur de Tourville.

Monsieur de Gramont, you have heard, I dare say, is appointed maire of this arrondissement, having quitted the army."

"Eh, he is young," said the Dame, "to leave the army, and our country in want of soldiers. He is married, I suppose,—but will you take a glass of my wine or brandy, eh, Monsieur Perrin?"

"Mon Dieu! avec plasir, Dame; you have always a kind heart and a good bottle of wine for a friend." And the two men sat down at a table, but Sergeant Perrin kept eyeing Julian Arden, who had lit his pipe, and was sauntering out to the yard.

"Pardon me, young man," said the Sergeant, "are you one of the crew of Captain Gaudet's craft, the 'Vengeance?'"

"No, Monsieur, I am not; though I think I shall join him."

Dame Moret looked very uneasy, but she did not let the gendarmes see that she was so. She placed a couple of bottles of wine, and glasses,

some nice oaten cake, and a jar of preserves, on the table.

"Ca, this is a luxury, Dame," said the sergeant, but, turning to Julian, he said: "Where do you come from, young man, and what is your name? You are a stranger to me."

"My name is Louis Lebeau," said Julian, coolly; "I am going to Rouen in a few days, after I have settled with Captain Pierre Gaudet."

"Sacre bleu! mon garçon, do not hesitate. Captain Gaudet is a brave man, and the 'Vengeance,' if she ever gets afloat again, is the best craft out of Havre, or Brest either. She took more prizes than any privateer on the coast, till that sacre frigate Anglais came in, and thought to cut her out of Havre in the very face of the forts."

"How so?" said Julian, quietly sitting down, Dame Moret handing him a glass, and putting a bottle of wine beside him, feeling quite relieved from her fears, seeing him take the questioning so coolly, and knowing as far as manner, and language went, that he was a perfect Frenchman.

"Why, you see, those devils of English will do anything when there's gold to be had. One of their frigates came to an anchor in the south-road, and the Captain with his boats thought to walk off with the 'Vengeance' Privateer. She was at anchor before the town. Diable! their insolence is wonderful, to think of taking, as it were, the bit out of your mouth."

"Just like them," said Julian, filling his glass. "Your health, Sergeant. Those islanders would take the teeth out of your mouth if you kept it open!"

"Sacre, oui! I believe you; but they were caught in a trap, you see, for there was no wind and the tide was against them, whilst the boats from the town, full of soldiers, and an armed lugger, and the guns of the fort opened on them, and so the vessel was retaken, and the English Captain, Monsieur Got-dam, and his crew were taken prisoners and sent to Paris."

"Were all the officers taken," said Julian, "and sent to Paris?"

"No, there's some obscurity about the rest of

the affair," said the gendarme. "The Captain and a midshipman only were sent to Paris. It seems Captain Pierre Gaudet made prisoner of one of the officers of the frigate—a regular diable—who shot his brother-in-law, he says, and took his schooner, so he thought he had a right to this prisoner himself. So he fastened him and a sailor taken with him down in the cabin of the 'Vengeance,' and in the evening came ashore leaving five or six men in the lugger. Sacre! would you believe it, but this tonnerre de diable of an Englishman got loose with his man, and actually sliced the gizzards of the five men on board, and ran off with the 'Vengeance.'"

"Mon Dieu!" said Julian, greatly interested, for he was now learning something about Sir Oscar De Bracy, "those two men were diables."

"Corbleu, you will say so when you hear the end. The next day news reached Havre that the 'Vengeance' had caught fire, and was run ashore near here under Lyon point, and burnt to the water's edge."

"You surprise me, Monsieur Le Sergeant,"

said Julian. "Then what became of Lieutenant—"

"Lieutenant!" said the gendarme. "I said nothing about a lieutenant."

"He must have been a lieutenant," said Julian, quite determinedly; "the lieutenant always accompanies his captain on an expedition of that kind."

"Well, perhaps so," said the Sergeant, "you are a sailor—I am not."

"Yes, that's true," said Julian. "I was mate of a fine brig, and young as I am I have seen a good deal of service; but what became of those Englishmen that got the 'Vengeance' under weigh, and took her out. If she caught fire, they must either have been burnt in her, drowned, or got on shore."

"Well, mon garçon," returned the gendarme, "there's a deal of mystery about those two dare-devils. Some say they were surely drowned, for no man will stay to be burnt that can escape that death by drowning. Neither modes of going out of the world are pleasant,"

and the Sergeant and his companion got up, having finished their wine. "But some of the country people who were attracted to the top of the cliff by the burning lugger swear they saw two figures on board when she struck, and that they threw themselves out of her; but when daylight came there were no signs of them. Myself and comrade here, when we heard of the affair, traversed all about the coast, but could get no trace of strangers; so I fancy they only threw themselves overboard to be drowned, and the tide washed back their bodies out to sea. By the way," added the Sergeant. "have you got your papers with you?"

"Oh, yes," returned Julian, taking out Louis Lebeau's pocket-book; "here they are, all right."

"All right—all right," said the Sergeant, without taking them. "Don't trouble yourself, but take my advice, and join Captain Pierre Gaudet's Privateer; he's a lucky man, though he did get his lugger half burnt."

"Bon jour, Dame Moret," added the sergeant.

"I shall take a walk across the fields to the old chateau; good day, and many thanks."

"You are heartily welcome, Monsieur Le Sergeant," returned the Dame. "You know you will always find a bottle of good wine here; so bon jour;" and the gendarmes departed.

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